LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY

continuing

The LONDON MERCURY and BOOKMAN

Edited by ROBERT HERRING

CONTENTS

Vol. 22 No. 25

NOTES ON NEW CONTRIBUTORS vii

ARTICLES

THE SIGN OF THE RAVEN
Peter A. Jamieson 318

MADISEN . . . . *Harry Ibbetson* 325

IT HAS COME TO THIS . *Robert Herring* 330

WATER PERILS IN MINES *Daniel Davies* 344

FRAGILE WARE . . *S. G. J. Ouseley* 356

A MAN'S LIFE . . . *Willy Goldman* 365

BRITISH MUSEUMS . *F. D. Klingender* 375

RICHARD SAVAGE, THE FIRST POET OF COLOUR . . *Jack Lindsay* 384

STREAMLINE POETRY
Marie Carmichael Stopes 395

CONTENTS—*continued*

POETRY

THE PEARL . . . *Sturge Moore* 401
SONNET . . . . *Julian Symons* 403
BREVITIES . . . *Siegfried Sassoon* 403
IMMORTAL CORE *Marie Carmichael Stopes* 404
IN TIME OF SUSPENSE *Laurence Whistler* 405
ONE FEBRUARY EVENING *Idris Davies* 408
BALLAD OF THE ROUGH SEA *Vernon Watkins* 409
HIGHLANDS . . . *Francis Scarfe* 412
HIS AUNT . . . . *Philip O'Connor* 413

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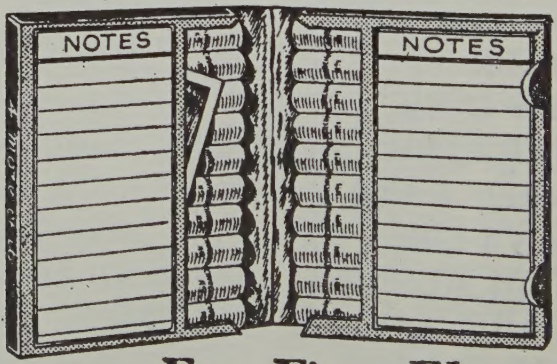

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CONTENTS—*continued*

STORY

EXTRAORDINARY LITTLE COUGH
Dylan Thomas 415

THEATRE

AN OLD BRISTOL THEATRE
Richard Southern 426

CINEMA

MONTAGE IN 1938 . *S. M. Eisenstein* 434

BRITISH FILMS . . . *Robert Herring* 445

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE 451

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CONTENTS—*continued*

REVIEWS OF BOOKS 454

By *John Rickman, Herbert Hodge, M. Elvey, Lambert Stone, D. Sturge Moore, L. Montague Harrod, Cicely McCall, G. R. N. List, K. B. N. Wall, Lorna Lewis, Arthur Calder-Marshall, Michael Murray, Dorothy Hartley, Richard Southern, H. K. Fisher, H. Forsyth Hardy, Walter Schmideberg, Tom Wintringham, Bryher, L. Isitt.*

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The Editor is glad to consider manuscripts and will be grateful to those authors who save secretarial side-tracking by enclosing addressed envelopes as well as stamps. Unsolicited contributions accompanied by neither will not be returned.
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NOTES ON NEW CONTRIBUTORS

PETER A. JAMIESON belongs to Lerwick, in the Shetland Isles. He is the author of *Up-Helly-Aa* and *The Viking Isles*, and has recently finished work on a novel dealing with the haaf fishers of the northern islands.

HARRY IBBETSON lives at Thaxted, and has collected a large amount of Essex lore, for whose publication in book-form S. L. Benusan has promised to write an introduction.

DANIEL DAVIES was colliery manager from 1900 to 1904, and County Mining Lecturer in Glamorgan from 1904 to 1936 (from 1912 onwards he was senior lecturer). He retired in 1936. The third edition of his *Problems in Land and Mine Surveying* was published at the end of last year.

WILLY GOLDMAN was born twenty-nine years ago in St. George's, Stepney. At the age of fourteen, he was taken from secondary school by his parents and put to work in engineering and the clothing industry in turn. He has contributed stories to *New Writing* since its inception and has just completed a book of reportage called *East End My Cradle*.

F. D. KLINGENDER is thirty-two and the author of *Clerical Labour in Britain* (1935). He worked with John Grierson as researcher for documentary film and wrote in collaboration with Stuart Legg, *Money Behind the Screen* (1937). He has contributed to the *Architectural Review*, *Burlington Magazine*, *Modern Quarterly*, *Left Review*, etc., and has completed a book on Goya to be published either this autumn or next spring in Paris.

S. G. J. OUSELEY lives in Stoke, but was born thirty-six years ago in East Anglia, the son of a writer.

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WRITE FOR A FREE SPECIMEN TO-DAY TO THE PUBLISHERS

"Scandinavian Review," 6 Warwick Court, Holborn, London, W.C. 1

MARIE CARMICHAEL STOPES best known for pioneer work in sociology, has an academic background. Among the subjects in which she specializes are coal mines and fossil plants. She is the author of volumes one and two of the Catalogue of Cretaceous Plants in the British Museum, and others of her publications include *Plays of Old Japan*, with Professor Sakurai; *The Constitution of Coal*, with Dr. R. V. Wheeler, and *Love Songs for Young Lovers*, reviewed in our May number.

STURGE MOORE, author and wood-engraver, numbers among his works *Armour for Aphrodite* (1929) and *Poems, Collected Edition* (1933). Early this autumn Martin Secker is bringing out his *The Unknown Known and a dozen odd poems*. He has just published a study of Matthew Arnold in *Essays and Studies*, the annual of the English Association, and he wrote on Yeats in the summer number of *English*, the Association's magazine.

FRANCIS SCARFE writes from the French Department of the University of Glasgow that he was born in 1911, educated at Cambridge, Durham, and Paris Universities, and has translated work of Lautreamont, Laforgue, Dali, etc. He has contributed to *New Verse*, *Twentieth Century Verse*, *Contemporary Poetry and Prose*, *The Year's Poetry, 1937–8*, etc., and is now writing a study of nineteenth-century French Irrationalists.

The following are previous contributors, and last appeared in the number after their names: Jack Lindsay (13), *Julian Symons* (16), *Laurence Whistler* (23), *Siegfried Sassoon* (1), *Idris Davies* (19), *Vernon Watkins* (20), *Philip O'Connor* (13), *Dylan Thomas* (23), *Richard Southern* (21), *S. M. Eisenstein* (24).

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The LONDON MERCURY and BOOKMAN
Edited by ROBERT HERRING

EDITORIAL

Readers may be surprised to see no change in the paper's format. The concensus of opinion, from both *Mercury* and *Life and Letters* readers, was that we should stay the same. We ourselves were somewhat surprised, but the proportion was seven to three. We therefore enter on our fifth year unaltered, but we celebrate this anniversary with a number devoted to a country to which we have not given hitherto as much attention as some—the United Kingdom.

The following pages seek to give aspects, representative without being routine, of life in this island of three countries and many races (Danes, Normans, Saxons, Flemings, Britons). It is typical of the mentality which the fusion of those races has achieved, that whilst the kingdom is called united, every country seeks to break away from the rest. The Nationalism of Scotland, Wales, as well as that of an island farther west, are much written of and discussed. That which is the theme of the succeeding article is less frequently, I think, even thought of.

THE SIGN OF THE RAVEN

By PETER A. JAMIESON

IN THE SHETLAND Islands there is nowadays much talk of a revival of Norse, or Norn, culture. Norway versus Scotland could be a headline to most of the contributions on Viking ancestry and similar subjects which appeared lately in the northern press.

This emergence of a Shetlandic school of thought seeming to want to jettison most things Scottish—with the possible exception of whisky—and rekindle the old Norn bale fires is a good sign.

It reveals the fact that many young Shetlanders are becoming aware of all that is best in their Viking traditions and culture, a culture essentially democratic and liberty-loving.

The Raven on the red Shetland Banner proudly flaunted at Up-Helly-Aa time is symbolical of the bird of wisdom, flying surely forward to progress, pointing the way to a fuller, happier life for the mass of the common people.

It is not symbolical of a return to the dark mystic urge of strife and doom ; and the organized movement of the island working people, the crofters, roadmen, fishermen, seamen and so on, would do well to see to it that side by side with this rekindling of Norn sentiment goes an awareness of the real, class issue at stake.

Some distinguished writers having " discovered " Shetland, put forward theories of Norn autonomy, with a reversion to " Mother earth and racial roots " as the salvation of the island communities around the Scottish coast.

Island " home rule ", as it were, with a " federation

of islands", with a flourishing of essential island speech and culture would not be a bad thing perhaps; but it is doubtful if this alone could bring back prosperity to the islesfolk.

A Shetlandic Parliament, or Thing, for instance, in Lerwick, attended by Thingmen, or councillors, from all the parishes, with the speeches delivered first in Shetlandic, then translated into English, would undoubtedly be a picturesque affair; but the real problem of the Shetland people would remain.

Whatever may be said or written about this question, it is the case that the mass of the Shetland common people are in no wise concerned about either "Norn autonomy" or "racial roots" and the "good black soil".

What they are worrying about is more mundane affairs, such as the collapse of the herring fishing after the shortest and poorest season on record, the price of sheep and wool, the demand for knitted goods, U.A.B. cuts, A.R.P., and the like.

The struggle to live, the fight for bread and margarine, occupies their attention. And when, at Up-Helly-Aa and similar occasions, lip-service is paid to "Viking ancestry" and the *Up-Helly-Aa Song* is sung, well, such things are seen as incidental to a grand night's entertainment.

The writers on the Scots versus Norse controversy seem to have overlooked the fact that it is in reality a class issue, not a matter of race against race.

What hinders Shetland's progress, as it hinders the progress of other lands, is the private ownership of the land and means of wealth production.

A small monied class own everything, while the mass

of the people are propertyless and entirely subjected to this class for the means of life.

In this class of capitalists in the Shetland islands may be found people who call themselves Scots, and others who say they are proud of their Norse ancestry.

This distinction of race, however, in no wise blinds them to their common interests, namely to unite as capitalists against the ordinary people who get their living by selling their power to labour at crofting, fishing, labouring, knitting to this small class.

However much the Shetland monied people may seek to fraternize with working-class lads at Up-Helly-Aa or Masonic festivals, under the plea of " common Viking ancestry ", the fact is that those monied people have nothing in common with the working people.

This " earth and racial roots " theory propounded by some Scottish writers as the salvation of the islands is nothing but a diversion of the people from the real problem. No wonder influential islanders are hailing such quack doctrines with acclaim ! With their usual astuteness, which keeps them on the backs of the workers, they see that as long as they can blind the ordinary people to the real issue just so long will they remain in power.

Those pretty theories woven in ivory towers in the seclusion of peaceful islands are escapist fantasies of people who have found the pace of the struggle for real national liberation too hot for them. Instead of remaining in the national and working-class movement engaging in day-to-day humdrum tasks of organization and agitation, they have fled the scene to dream mystic dreams helpful only to the Nazis, and the creeping death they bring.

The problem of how to restore prosperity to the islands so that they can give a comfortable, cultured life to fifty thousand people, is the issue at stake in the north at the moment.

At present the population is about twenty-one thousand, slowly sinking into poverty. With the disastrous collapse of the herring fishing, leading to a panic flight of islanders to seek their livelihood elsewhere, regardless of working conditions, this figure of twenty-one thousand will soon be out of date.

District after district, island after island, is being drained of people. Crofts are being left to the aged and infirm, with a consequent deterioration in cultivation, which leads to scanty crops and inability to keep cattle. Where ten years ago a township had about one hundred and thirty inhabitants, leading a more or less thriving existence, at the present time about forty or fifty people are to be found. In some places out of a cluster of " biggins " or houses numbering anything from six to thirty, perhaps three or four chimneys may be seen reeking. The rest are empty and desolated, with roofs falling in, windows smashed, doors blattering in the wind, convenient sheltering places for the stravaegin' sheep.

The elderly people and " poors " are left in many a township, the doctor's and pension officer's cars being about the only conveyances seen in the neighbourhood during the round of the year, with perhaps an occasional visit from a van from the nearest shop with bakers' bread and cheap tinned and other foods. In districts close to the sea, where fish are teeming, vans come all the way from Lerwick selling fish ! Either there are no men left to go off for fish, or the boats at their disposal are old and unseaworthy.

Schools are shut up, their handful of pupils transferred to the school in the nearest district, or conveyed by car to a school some miles distant. Churches stand empty, their bells rusting in the steeples. Boats that once braved the angry haaf, carrying ashore many a good cargo of cod, lie crumbling in the grass-covered sheltering noosts at the shore. A kirkyard peace is in many a township where formerly tall strong men and women tilled the straggling, shallow rigs of the toons near those low-walled thatched houses white-glistening in the sun.

Only the bleating of the sheep, calling of wild birds, sough of the wind on the hills, and the surging sea at the rocky shore break the deathly slumber shrouding the deserted townships.

BABEL

I once stood in a Spanish street, trying to obtain directions while my companion looked up in a dictionary the words I might want. As the first few curious children became a crowd, and the crowd turned into a concourse, the words I wanted turned out to be those not in a dictionary. I would have drawn what I wanted except that I can't draw; not what you'd call, recognizably.

This situation would have been avoided had I had then what is available now—a book containing pictures of all a traveller in a strange land is likely to want. You choose your picture, point, and there you are. What happens if in Greenland you point to a camel I shan't know till I have been and I can foresee complications (in fact, I am determined to make them) if, wanting a calendar, I point in midsummer to the one marked "2nd January". But nearly every other contingency is provided for by the compilers of Point It Out *(Collins, 3s. 6d.). Each page deals with some recognized subject, and each is headed with the name of that subject in six languages, English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Swedish. Under Motoring, you will find pictures of every known spare-part; under Hairdressing, all you may need, man or woman, to have done. There are diagrams of the human frame, for any accidents that befall you, and as examples of the thoroughness of the book may be quoted the facts that, under Clothes, those always difficult things to describe, checks and herring-bones, are depicted, whilst darts and backgammon find a place under "pasatiempos", which in Swedish are "sport". To outwit laziness each object is numbered and you may look up its name, in six languages, at the end.*

Meanwhile, it is typical of our times that as we reduce

the barriers of language on one hand, we raise new ones on the other. Switzerland stresses Swiss-German, Finnish slowly gains ground over Swedish in Suomi, but Belgium bickers over two languages. In these islands, Welsh has yet to be recognized in Welsh courts of law, whilst Gaelic has never lacked supporters. We are familiar with these claims, and yet, whilst bewailing the standardization of English, ignore the dialects at our door. Of which the following essay is an example, from Essex.

MADISEN

By HARRY IBBETSON

DARKTERS DONT KNOW averything, no, thats a fact they dont. Set their faith too much in the 'ode Kimicals what rot yer innards an tun a sick man inter a dead corpse sooner nor annything.

Called the Darkter ter see moy Annie. She'd the Hoopin Carf. He gie she som sart o' Madisen in a Bartle what made she a soight wusser nor what she wor afower. Says Oi ter me woife: "Jinney," says Oi, "You goo an chock that theyer ode kimical warter away—she own't hev ne mower o' *that*. You gie she what moy ode mother gie Oi—Froyed Moice.[1] That'll cure she quicker nor arl the Darkter's madisen, see if ut own't."

An so ut did, boy Gor! We gie she two-three gret ode Moice froyed an dressed ter look loike sparrers. Ate they down, she did, got 'em inter har suffun wunnerful. Thart they *wor* sparrers, Oi dont doubt. Cured she a treat. Better be half the next day she wor, an well as aver she wor the day arter. Ode Darkter says: "What *aver* yow bin a-giein she?" Oi says: "If Oi tode ye, ye'd think Oi daft, so Oi aint a-gooin ter say. But Oi'll say this much, an uts God-A-Moighty's Truth, *yow* aint no sart uv a Darkter, yow aint!"

Oi tode he that, straight owt. Roight ter his face. He dint half gie Oi an ode fashioned look, Oi kin tell ye. Oi thinks ter meself, if yer looks could kill as well as yer madisen Oi'd be dead man.

Fact is, the ode Darkters dont know narthin. Jest what they gets owter Books. Oi nivver see a Book yit

[1] Fried mice, an old country remedy for Whooping Cough.

what had much sense in't—save the Boible, an thats writ in sech smarll print ye can't read ut.

Moy ode mother oodn't goo ter a Darkter. Dint hode oov they. Arl the madisen she wanted she plocked owter the hedge-rows, same as mosst they ode 'uns used ter do. Knew a cure fer mosst averything, she did. Goo owt in the dews in the arly mornin an plock a bit o' this an a bit o' that—Briary Root, Crow's Onions, Monk's Hood, Alder Flowers, an sech—take 'em hom, stew they ovver the foire, cure annything.

Lot o' the things they ode 'uns knowed are lost now. Nobbody knows narthin abowt Harbs now-a-days. Harbs ! Oi sin moy ode mother cure hun'neds o' people oov they. An they'd stay cured too. Not loike the ode Darkter's madisen what droives owt one ailment an lets in a wusser.

Ye see arl the folk crippled oov Screwmatics. Used ter goo owt and git stong be the bees, when Oi wor yong. That'd cure 'em. Sin ode fellers goo ter the hoive an clar hode on a great handful—shove ut down their shut-front—jest ter git stong. Do they the power o' good. Tis the acid in the sting what doos ut, Oi've hud tell.

Do ye know what the ode farm-hands do when they cut the'selves ? Goo an scrap a gret dollop o' cow dung from a hot cow-tud an smarm that on the wound. That'll stop ut festerin. Another ode way is ter wrop a gret ode cob-web round the cut—stop the bleedin an heal ut quick as annything.

They used ter use cow-dung ter dye the hayer too. Goo owt in the arly mornin when the dews wor on the ground, look fer an ode stale cow-tud what had sunk a bit in the middle (as they doos) an scoop up the wet

what had settled theyer. Plaster ut on the head. That ood dye the hayer black as jet.

Then they used ter swoller frogs. Sin that don. Clear the chest, that ood. Sin an ode feller goo owt inter the medders be the river a-lookin fer a frog ter swoller. Went oov he meself. Fount a gret ode frog be the bridge —ketched hode on ut be the back legs an down ut went ! Roight down. Gret ode frog, big as me fist. Kep ut down fer mosst an hour, he did, then—up she com ! Sayed ut did he a power o' good. Made he spew toidy, anny-ode-how, toime he got ut up agin.

Hev ye took nottis how they yong gals an sech suffer oov pimples ? Non o' that in moy day. Soon cure that. Nivver did hev a pimple, no, nor a boil, not arter Oi'd bin cured. Jest take a bit o' pitch (Pitch, moind ye, not tar, pitch) an roll ut inter a ball, sam soize as a big pill, then swoller ut. No mower pimples, no, ne boils oither, arter that.

Tis wunnerful what a bit o' string ool do. Yow take a dog, now. One what aint had the Distemper. Toy a bit o' string round uts neck, that'll kip the Distemper away. Jest a bit o' ode boinder thread looped round the neck, that 'll stop Distemper. Good ode fashioned remedy, that is.

Another ode remedy they used ter hev was ter stop Noightmare. Bad dreams. They'd get a round ston oov a hole in't (same as ye kin pick up mosst annywayer) an thread a bit o' cord through ut, then hang ut ovver the bed-stiddle, alse on the bed-post. But thats mower loike a charm, that is.

Ah, theyer's a wunnerful lot o' cures folk dont know narthing abowt the' days. Oi sin hosses cured o' canker oov Black Gunpowder, an Foot an Mouth in cattle cured

be Alum and Salt. Alum an Salt mixed, spread ovver the cow-house floor so as the cattle ood tread ut, Alum an Salt rubbed ovver the beasts' snouts an tongues, an a gret handful o' rock salt an Alum shoved down their throats—then plenty o' warter ter drink, an in three days the cattle was cured. An now they kills avery beast what has ut, an a lot what aint—a wicked waste.

AS USUAL

It must be, when you think of it, pretty hard to get people to furnish homes to-day which may be gone to-morrow. A firm in Fulham Road may, therefore, be congratulated on having hit on a scheme which makes the best of both worlds. They issue a catalogue, in which the left-hand pages give, so to speak, recipes for refuge, whilst the right-hand ones continue to expatiate on "glorious figured Walnut suites" and pianos, with "tuition for one year free, if desired". Thus, on page one you are told to "collect the essential things with which to equip" your refuge room, and opposite you are tempted with a "Dining Room Set of striking design and utility", the sideboard containing "fifty-seven pieces of splendidly-made stainless cutlery". And so on for nine pages. But, by the tenth, the compilers have got so enthusiastic about it all that under "Ideal Equipment of a Refuge Room", they omit to include any of the pieces they have previously plugged. The "dignified oak", the "delightful three-piece suite in dermide", will play no part in their refuge room. Even business finally gives up trying to have it both ways. A saddening thought, but at least there is one comforting fact. "Each of these Lovely Rooms is Delivered Free for One Shilling Weekly," and it will cost much more than that to demolish even one wall.

IT HAS COME TO THIS

" 'tis an unweeded garden
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!"
(*Hamlet, Act* 1, *Scene* 2.)

By ROBERT HERRING

I BOUGHT A cat when the trenches they dug in the square sent mice into my house. So to-day it was natural that I bought a magazine which had cats on the cover. As I turned to the Siamese section, there fell out for me to sign, an appeal—against buck-hunting in Hants, or fox-hunting in Devon, or some other, whatever.

As I stooped to pick up the appeal, my eyes saw the sky, wherein was happening, for seven miles round London, a balloon-barrage display.

I hadn't seen the balloons since that last war. They reminded me then of rams' heads. That's what I remember mostly about them, and when anyone says " the last war ", as I have just done, and I of course say " which ? " and am told—I think, " O, the one in which the balloons were like rams."

By the same token, I can never see a tassel now, without thinking of the first refugees. They were Belgian soldiers, driving along Eastbourne front. They drove the same way as had a boy, a few months earlier, who had been out with his mother and, passing us on our Sunday walk, shouted " They've mobilized "—or " murdered ", I forget which, but we knew it was War, that thing which till then we had only known in relics of nursery mugs carrying Lord Roberts or the picture of Kitchener

coming through thinning soup as one got to the bottom of the plate.

The Belgians wore caps like the first soldiers who were billeted on the school, they were Welsh Borderers.

Looking back now, I can see how things got steadily stranger. But they didn't seem strange at the time. Then, as now, we had expected it for so long (I remember, when I was at my day-school, the fence at the bottom of the garden fell down and mother having replaced it by a brick wall, the gardener said, " That'll keep them Germans out." This caused me to want very much a toy drum with which, I persuaded myself, I could do better than the brick wall ; by frightening them Germans off before they reached it. But I think, chiefly, I was tired of being tantalized by the drum, daily passed on the way to school). When war came, it seemed natural to be in it as much as possible—it was participating in the boy's-books of Henty, but in different terms.

The terms we, ten to thirteen, took part in were these ; increasingly cold hot-water pipes, making scarves, worse and worse food—to this day the Russian revolution is linked in my mind with Scrambled Eggs Morning, because that was the day of the week on which the news came through. Only, they weren't eggs by that time ; they were a powdered product, liquid at the edge, gluey in the centre, but all right for about half an inch in between if you got to them in time ; that is, if Prayers weren't too long . . .

We could hear the guns from our playing field and I remember bursting into tears in the middle of an open-air boxing lesson when it suddenly occurred to me that those guns might soon be doing damage to my brother. He had signed on, aged eighteen,

for foreign service, in August, 1914; skill at musketry delayed him, as instructor. I had got used to the guns and I had got used to the idea of his being " for the dark ". But until one morning, I had never linked the two. When I did, boxing, it was with disastrous effects to my guard, and the sergeant impressed on me (how truly that is the word) the need for a " curtain of muscle " over my stomach. I learnt shooting, too, but as my shots were found more frequently on others' targets than on mine, I was removed as a menace, and no doubt cried some more.

I remember being preached to about the film of the Somme, " in which maybe ser-oom erv yeow will see (*very quick, this bit*) those-you-know-ai-meh-aievn-sigh, lerv-falling. Yew should Ve-ow (*not that it is wicked or waste*, my itals.) to Ta-ache their place, and now to God the Father (*what of mine?*) God the Son (*what of ours?*) and please Mother, why isn't there anything anywhere about a Brother? But Mother had her own troubles, one of which was to keep from breaking down during

> " Time like an ever-rolling stream
> Bears all its sons away."

Mother entertained many South African soldiers, and one day, when some were home, the vicar's sister, a spinster, called. She made a speech, the speech, about " It is a great and glorious thing to die for one's country ". It was the same kind of thing as the actresses were doing by auctioning kisses, except that there weren't any kisses, and Mother said in effect " Nuts ". Mother, though kind, you'd never call free and easy, but when she told that spinster just when

Christianity became practical, you should have seen those soldiers ease up.

Mother did war-work. She didn't know it, but that meant that for the first time, one could join in her games, instead of her stooping to one's own on the nursery floor. She was in the splint room at a depot, and she worked at two Huts. One, daytime, at Walham Green, where she got cross at the others haggling over becoming overalls, and one at Victoria, over the Underground, where she didn't get cross, because she worked nights, and there she could, in her own motto, " get on with it."

The first time she was " getting on with it " when I was at home, there was an air raid. I'd come back that day for the holidays, and there were new maids, whom I had not seen before. When the ridiculousness began, it therefore didn't occur to me to be anything but alone. When she returned, she asked me what I had done and I said, I had stood at the window, and she said, wasn't that foolish, and I said, no, I knew God would look after—either me or her, I forget. Such a Fauntleroy statement gave me a reputation which didn't last very long, but what was genuine was my feeling that if she were out and my brother were out, and one or two others I knew were out, one must, we'd recognize it now, " identify " too, and be as near as possible.

Sometimes I was allowed to be really near—to serve at the tobacco stall in the Hut. That was terrific, because there was the guilty thrill of openly handling cigarettes I had begun to smoke covertly. It was exciting trying to develop a bluff while one found out what " *Weights* " were. I remember Mother's indignation at the increase in these orders, because the tobacco firms put up their

prices, whilst their dividends soared, and they got kudos for supplying free cigarettes for Princess Mary's gift boxes. There were lots of old girls at that Hut who gave Players for *Weights*, and made up the difference themselves, ladies with cars, as well as chars giving their time off, whom you'd expect to be able to be generous. These ladies, car or char, didn't get names or embossed pictures but they got smiles from soldiers, who, returning on or from leave, would only be served by " that lady, the Sergeant sans sting "—even though that particular lady was the one who had been overheard telling one to be sure to put the feet of his bed in his boots, lest the others steal them.

There weren't many of those days, I expect, when I was allowed to help. I would say, six. Perhaps they were two or three. But they remain in mind as if they were a year's continual service—because they were (apart from being left behind at a funeral) one's first reality. And reality, when you meet it, is kinder than being introduced to such things as school, for which you are told to " be a little man " or meeting a grandmother in front of rival cousins, when you have to be a " little gentleman ".

One hadn't time to be that, behind a counter—even if it weren't two or three times, but perhaps only ten minutes. One was there, a sort of extension of trademark, " Players, please " or." Mine's Bovril ", one was a machine, even if only made out of Meccano. One was asked for things in Midland or Melbourne accents one had never heard before, Americans said " cookies " and one automatically gave Wrigley and, when that was refused, as automatically, a biscuit—and the smile that came from that wasn't automatic.

But some were. One learnt to distinguish. The look of the one who'd come back, the look of the one who was going back, and that of the one going for the first time . . . I honestly wasn't there long. As I write this, I am prepared to say I wasn't there at all, that I just heard it only from my mother (though I know that isn't true, because I remember the arrangement of the stock under the counter). But I can never go by Victoria without wondering which was worse, the men going out or the men coming in . . . and being cheerful to both.

Those were holidays. There were also, of course, Gaby Deslys, *The Man Who Stayed at Home*, with Dennis Eadie and a revolving fireplace, there was Pavlova at a charity matinée (which also included a scene from *The Girl who was a Film Star* or *The Girl with a Camera*, I forget all but two irrelevances—the camera was downstage, left, and I was reprimanded by a woman behind me for being so excited over my first sight of Pavlova that I spoilt her view (I later became both ballet and film critic).

School went on, with indignation over Nurse Cavell because our matron had the same name, and nostalgia when a master was killed, because the head's wife took to putting regimental buttons on her Liberty golf-coats. Our Classics master was called up, which meant that we had to learn German (then taught by the French master). I'd have missed the joke, had not my old nurse, through marrying a soldier, sent to Salonika, taken again to work, which landed her at Eastbourne, so that she sent me a book. It was by chance a novel of Hardy and thus I discovered 'irony', later to be plugged so by Lucas.

The result of the switch-over from Greek to German was that one failed in one's scholarship for Clifton (at least that's my story, and I stick to it). But one got there, and after spending most days of the week in khaki, wondered why. Not exactly why the things happened that did, but why among such. First of all, the boys—Clifton was a " public " school, but the goodness of the public element was vitiated by the fact that many pupils were of profiteer parentage. Just as I had never met Welsh before they were billeted on us at Eastbourne, so, as Londoner, I had never before met your chap from Cotton-land (Gracie wasn't vocal then). When I did they were spoilt, because the War was to them one long wake. I didn't like them. I became aware of class, which I never had with the Welsh soldiers at Eastbourne.

There were also the masters. I was lucky in mine. At prep school, the ignorance or stuntedness of a master didn't matter so much, because one was, for the first time, a boy away from home, meeting men as strangers, and masters were the first. By public-school time, if one's parents have the means to send one there, those means stand a good chance of being wasted if one doesn't have the luck to come under men such as Keigwin and Taylor. As I say, I was lucky . . . but it was only luck and Keigwin didn't come till 1920, after the war, and it's war-days I'm writing about.

We lived oddly then. We yelled " Spuds for Mary King ", because said Mary was so mean on the food rations that we had to revenge ourselves on her, the headmaster's wife, by each taking a potato on the dish's way up to her. When meals were over, we clamped over the table in our boots—Corps boots. We might get full

marks from our drawing master in drawing and then get turned down by him on pontoon work in the Zoo garden. That was too much for an adolescent, and I was finally grateful when a Swedish captain absolved me from further drill by discovering I had a curved spine. . . .

So that Clifton chiefly means being employed, as members of the O.T.C., to shovel snow (I piled mine across the junction of roads), of being marshalled to hear the Prince (fair hair too long) say to Bonham Carter, " You were with me in France " and King croak " He's a boy, he's a boy ", but how should the Prince know that, who had been turned from adolescence into embassage ? Then Haig, refusing to be lionized, as he never had been brilliant at school and Keigwin continuing to give helping hands to those who, when their time came, went on. I to Cambridge. To backwash of war.

They didn't know it, and to me, after the clamping of Clifton, it was Marlowe's world literally. But—one was shunted, in many ways an arrested eighteen, on to equal terms, as undergraduates, with men who had been through the war. Dons, too, had come back and, with a few exceptions, were too creative or else too disillusioned to create, were too busy in themselves to be to one what Keigwin and Taylor had been before. Enthusiasm was out, Housman was in and the smart slogan was " The bookshelves we fill push us into the street ". I never know whether one " found one's feet " at Cambridge or laid the foundations on which to stand later. But one learnt, chiefly, all the things that can't be taught, and gradually one caught up with one's self—self hadn't counted in the war-years ; now, one saw that

if one were going to do anything, one had to train, and not throttle, that self.

Just as the war ended so suddenly that at first we didn't believe it, so time at Cambridge was over. Term had followed term, preparing for and passing exams. Suddenly, the last exam was done, and then what? Something one had only just begun to think about—a job.

One wasn't quite prepared for that. War had ruled it out, as it had ruled self out. Of course, the demobilized men were looking for jobs and finding it hard. But we hadn't even been mobilized. And we were trying to take our places in a world that was trying to be a peace-world, and such we had never seen.

I got a job, finally, unpaid, learning the ropes on the *London Mercury*. When four years after Squire left it and the Morven Press approached me, then editing this, I was able to laugh and, finally, found myself with what Fleet Street had for years regarded as a liability until the news of its sale meant "copy" for those who could write laments on its passing, which they had done nothing to prevent.

So now here I am—owing to my job, knowing many celebrities I can look in the face, but equipped with a secretary whom I can't. The celebrities have had time to do their jobs. I've had reasonable time in which to show I can or can't do mine. My secretary hasn't. He came to me on his first job, and trained himself to reach the one above it, which he now has. He can sign letters for me, act as deputy on occasion, and do much of my work. He doesn't, of course, exist.

He can't sign a cheque or be witness. He's under age. Legally, he is not a responsible person.

His father may vote in a government that promises no conscription. But that government can overrule his father and vote his son into an army which did not exist when his vote was taken.

How am I to think of this? This is where we get back to those balloons. In the days at Clifton, we took all the parades, the built-up bullying by big boys and by little masters made military, we took it then, we were used to it; we, or they, were dying for something, and it was our turn next.

Every term, boys went off, called up. Every week, boys were posted. It was all right then, taken for granted; so many weeks' terms; then called up; if you were lucky, a cushy job (by 1916 it was that) or a Blighty, either better than Saturday night boxing. From 1917–18 we were keyed up to the idea that however much we failed to make out at school, we were going on, the thirteenth hundred thousandth little pig into the same machine. . . . But then, the machine stopped.

The little pig, that had taken it for granted that the purpose of his piggery was to be fed into the machine, was left outside, in the cold harsh world, at a time which was also both the Billie-Carleton-cocaine and the Proust-and-peace era. He had to re-orientate, reconsider.

At first one felt curiously disloyal. It had been in order when the just-olders went, because one knew one was going too. When one was let out of that there were many kinds of reaction. Not only the public ones, of the jazz-joy period, but private ones, which included slight resentment at having to make one's way, and when one got used to that and began to put one's best foot forward, being bumped into by those who had returned, and they, also, had to make their way—in the same world as us, a

world neither of us quite knew what to make of. Then gradually, hope. That came with the fusing of the finish of both public and private reaction—there must be no more war. Privately, that that was the way one could fight, that that was the way one was carrying on, as third little pig who hadn't been sent to market. Publicly, that war was stupid, it seemed clear that it didn't pay, and what was the point of it?

There was none and its absence was driven home by the "boys in blue". You remember the wounded's uniform, blue suits, with white lapels, scarlet tie? If you don't, you can still see it, there are plenty about. Cousins of mine had turned a house into a home for them, either the incurables or the long, very long cases. Blue suits filtered from it. A new population, almost as if men from Mars (which they were). . . . This summer, I was again in Roehampton, and I thought, I used to live near here and now here am I, who has written a pamphlet on pubs, but never been in one in this village. I left the bus, and went in. A man in the parlour said good evening, we talked. His pint lasted some time, because he coughed a good deal and that seemed to put him off drinking. A friend came in. They discussed their day.

One had been to the pictures, not that he cared about pictures, but you get a free tea. The other had been taken for a drive. *Taken* . . . I looked at them. They were both dressed the same. The newcomer's suit was a little brighter in colour, that was all. . . . Boys in blue, old men now, one with a cough and the other lame, rheumy-eyed. These were they who, when young, had made the world safe for such as myself.

I left. In those twenty years, they, un-able, had done

nothing. I, able, not much more. . . . From that past, I went into a present which is hard, too, to face. For we don't think war stupid any more. We think it inevitable. We even wonder if, with our present economics, peace isn't more disastrous than war. For so long we have allowed our leaders to lead us into a world of floodable trenches, gas masks, designs for dying, grey-outs timed to suit London's theatre-traffic, and so on. We are faced now with the dangers of disgusted indifference on the one hand and tension that will finally find outlet in " Any way, for heaven's sake, so I were out of your whispering " on the other. We see in the shops stacks of tinned foods, officially recommended ; we do not ask why none are concentrated, why it is not possible to evolve a war-time ration, as polar rations are for explorers. We shrug our shoulders and say " they have to sell the stuff somehow. Probably the tinned-quail people have friends in the government." We send our conscripts to waterlogged camp (because science can't foretell weather ?) and call them " guests of the country ". We invent a new myth for the sergeant-major—one that would make Santa Claus seem a bully. We have trenches in our parks and squares, buckets of sand in the shops, tin shelters used to grow flowers on in our back-yards. We get used to these properties from a lunatic asylum, and each, in our own way, go on being lunatic, each, in the best manner, saying, " But not as looney as you." We accept it. We have let ourselves in for living that way, and we know it's not living, but we take our gas masks and go off for our holiday.

It may be, to Stockholm. On the way out, that city seems the traditional refuge, outpost, neutrality, Scandinavian safety. On the way back, there obtrudes

something that hadn't before—a gas-mask in a shop-window. On the way back, Stockholm is seen no longer as outpost of safety, it is fringe of frenzy. From Finland, from the North, you are back in Europe.

I knew what I would find in London. The old war plans and appeals. I knew, too, I think, that when I bought a magazine, ten to one, a petition for animals would fall out. Why not? It has done something for them, raising our voices on their behalf.

For that reason, let us class men as beasts. Prevent Cruelty—not to each other, but to ourselves. We have a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. In the House of Commons, they have currently a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Chamberlain (*Spectator*, 28.7.39). Somewhere between these extremes, might we not have a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Human Beings? Might we not do as much by ourselves as we do for weasels, widgeons, or wallabies?

We'll know it isn't practical. We'll know it doesn't take sufficient into account. We know there may not be a war if enough English money is tied up in Germany. We know about the Bank of England, and Birmingham; about *Tory M.P.*, about *The Link*, about profiteers and fifth-columnites. We know it is nearly impossible for us, in Europe, to avoid killing each other as unpleasantly as we know how. We know so much that we have forgotten we don't even enjoy it very much. And though it's too late to be of much use, before we of my generation find those younger facing what we just remember having heard of, even seen, might we not put it on record that, towards the end, we have the idea of being, let's admit it, as sentimental about men as we are about stags; ducks, sparrows, cats, horses; mice, fleas, or what-have-you?

FURTHER TO OURS OF THE FIRST, ULT.

The disclosure of the I.R.A. plan to blow up the Houses of Parliament prompts further quotation from Herbert Fry's London in 1886: *"Strangers are not now allowed to see the Houses of Parliament, the order was issued directly after the dynamite explosion of 1885 and is still in force." It is worth recalling that the only time the Houses of Parliament have been burnt down was in 1834, when the burning of the used wooden tallies of the Court of Exchequer overheated the furnaces and set fire to the woodwork of the library. Tallies, some may be surprised to notice, did not go out of use until 1826.*

WATER PERILS IN MINES

By DANIEL DAVIES

THE PERILS INSEPARABLE from mining are well known. Not the least of these is the danger from inrushes of water. During the first 36 years of the present century there were 61 floodings in mines under the Coal Mines Regulation Acts of Great Britain, causing the death of 228 persons. Compared with the loss of life from other causes, the number is not large; still, the water peril will become increasingly important in the future.

Worked-out mines become reservoirs for accumulations of water. As the few unpierced portions of the coalfields are attacked and the coal seams proved, to steer clear of the old workings taxes the skill and vigilance of the mining engineer. There are two ways of coping with the menace: (1) unwater the old workings; (2) leave an adequate barrier of coal against the waterlogged area. In either case an accurate plan is highly desirable. Mine managements know only too well that the plans of old workings are not always accurate. In fact, inaccurate plans account for about 20 per cent. of the accidents due to flooding. And so, although the law requires no special precautions to be taken until the present workings approach to within 40 yards of the old, it is the practice in some districts to tap the old workings by bore-holes at 80 or 100 yards distant, thus allowing a substantial margin for possible error of position. Even this distance may prove insufficient. At Waterloo Main colliery, Yorkshire, in 1934, a bore-hole driven in advance struck the old Woodlesford colliery workings, the position of which

proved to be 154 yards nearer the Waterloo Main workings than the plan showed them to be.

The Tarenni Glamorgan colliery disaster of 1st November, 1909, whereby five lives were lost, was due to an inrush from old workings. So far as the information went, the point where the water broke in was a very long way from the old workings. The surveyor in charge said that no plan of the old workings was available, they having been abandoned 56 years before. He further agreed that the old workings, as shown on the working plan produced at the inquest, could not be taken as strictly accurate.

* * *

A re-survey of Killan colliery, Glamorgan, after its flooding on 27th November, 1924, revealed slip-shod surveying which possibly contributed to the disaster. In fact there was no proper surveying. The working-places were marked on the plan by guesswork, the excuse given being that it was difficult to use an instrument of precision on the high gradient of the seam, which lay at an inclination of about 40 degrees from the horizontal.

The Pantgwyn (North Wales) accident of February, 1885, whereby three men were drowned, was due to a deliberate marking of workings on the mine plan without making a proper survey.

There are other instances of plans which are inaccurate because of sheer neglect and indifference. The law demands that the plan of an abandoned mine must show the workings as at the time of abandonment. Let us suppose that the statutory quarterly survey was made and plotted a month or six weeks previously. A further

survey is deemed not worth while, and the plan, purporting to be a plan of the mine at the time of abandonment, is deposited with the Mines Department. This means that advances made during the four or six weeks are not shown on the plan, or they are plotted thereon at random; and the plan is to that extent incomplete and inaccurate. I am very far from suggesting that this kind of thing is usual; but that it has been done I know from experience.

* * *

Absence, or unavailability, of plans of the old workings account for about 12½ per cent. of the inrushes. The outstanding case under this head is the Montague colliery disaster (Scotswood, Northumberland) of 30th March, 1925, by which 38 persons were drowned. Later, a plan of the old workings was found; and this, although 70 years old, proved remarkably accurate when checked by another survey.

Inadvertent and unforeseen holings into accumulations of water have happened, where no charge of incompetence or neglect could be preferred. Thus, on 28th July, 1837, at Chapel End pit, Workington colliery, Cumberland, the sea broke in and drowned all therein, and no bodies were ever recovered. Although there had been a good deal of seeping of water and sand through fissures in the roof of the seam, no one suspected danger because there was a good thickness of strong strata—about 40 yards—between the coal seam and the sea bottom. What actually happened was that an unexpected break was made into a sandwash, which was probably an old mouth of the River Derwent.

At Car House colliery, Yorkshire, where eight men were drowned on 16th June, 1913, precautions were

taken by boring long holes in advance as the exploring heading approached the old workings. But the bore-holes missed them and the water broke into the advancing heading. At the inquest the jury gave their opinion that " the system of boring was not sufficient, and the accident was due to an error of judgment and not of negligence on the part of the management ".

Trespass has caused many floodings. A certain colliery works coal beyond its own boundary and encroaches on adjacent property. In time the colliery is worked out, but, for obvious reasons, the trespass is not shown on the plan of the abandoned mine. Some time later another colliery, working the same seam, approaches the abandoned mine. Work proceeds and no trespass is suspected until the tragedy occurs. This is just what happened on 9th December, 1896, when miners at River Level colliery, Aberdare, holed into the old workings of the adjoining Ysguborwen colliery.

The Harriseahead colliery, North Staffs, flooding of 10th March, 1924, was due to a trespass of 60 yards by the neighbouring colliery.

Fortunately, the inrush was unattended by loss of life, but it is noteworthy for the rescue of a miner named Edward Booth. All had escaped except this man, who was overtaken by the flood and shut in without hope of coming out alive. Paling Baker, the colliery manager, asked for volunteers to rescue Booth. He said : " Somebody will have to get Ned out. Who's going with me ? " Instantly Harry Wilson, a road corporal, responded. The two men fought their way through water chest deep along roads filled to within twelve inches of the roof, not knowing the extent to which the water might rise and cut off the ventilation and their way of escape.

Both men were awarded the Edward Medal and their names were entered on the Carnegie Roll of Heroes. The Trustees in Wilson's case undertook the cost of a four years' mining course.

Men employed in shaft-sinking have been imperilled by sudden inrushes which, in some cases, have forced up the shaft bottom. I believe the worst accident of this kind was that of 6th March, 1897, at the Simpson pit, Kent, when eight sinkers were overwhelmed by a burst of sand and water from the pit floor. Their bodies were dug out of the sand six weeks later, after the shaft had been drained.

In the case of highly-inclined coal seams which are overlaid by beds of alluvium heavily watered, great care is necessary to avoid working the coal too close to the beds above. Neglect of such precaution has sometimes caused a burst-through of the alluvium into the mine, filling the roadways and engulfing many of the workers. The Stanrigg disaster of 9th July, 1918, was due to such an inflow, and resulted in the death of nineteen persons. It may be pointed out that in many instances of inflow of moss, sand, mud, and clay, the victims' bodies were never recovered. This was the case at Roachburn colliery in Northumberland and Brereton colliery in Staffordshire; both in 1908.

Frequently the shafts of abandoned mines were covered over and their existence forgotten. Usually they became filled with water. Long after, it may happen that they are holed into, with a resulting loss of life. The Dudley Wood accident of 27th July, 1903, and Bamfurlong on 23rd December, 1911, are examples.

From the foregoing it will be realized that the danger from water is very real, and it is not

surprising that engineers have, during the last 150 years, stressed the importance of a systematic mapping of mines and the need to preserve records of all mining operations.

* * *

The State is in duty bound to protect its subjects from hazards of all kinds. This it does by promoting legislation and enforcing its observance; and it is of interest to trace the steps taken by Parliament to safeguard the workers from this peril of water. A Select Committee of the House of Commons, reporting in 1835, said that among means of prevention of accidents were the provision of accurate plans of the mine workings, and showing also the position of adjacent abandoned mines. The South Shields Committee of 1839, which reported in 1842, declared that plans of mines should be compulsorily registered. Seymour Tremenheere,[1] in his report for 1848, appended a note emphasizing the value of accurate plans, and deploring the lack of same at most mines. At last the Government moved, and the Mines Act of 1850 was passed. This required the provision of plans of mines, such plans to show the workings up to a date of not more than six months previously. An Act of 1860 dealt with old workings, and prescribed bore-holes in advance of the approaching workings; and, *if necessary*,[2] side bore-holes on each side. The exploring heading to be not more than 12 feet wide. The epoch-making Mines Act of 1872 required the deposition, with the Secretary of State, of the plan of any abandoned mine within three months

[1] The Commissioner appointed to watch the working of the Ashley Act of 1842.

[2] My italics—D. D.

of the abandonment; and the plan must show the position of the workings at such time. This Act also reduced the maximum width of the heading advancing towards old workings from 12 feet to 8 feet, and set the minimum length of bore-holes at 5 yards in advance. The Mines Act of 1887 stipulated for further details to be shown on the plans of abandoned mines; and for the first time specified the minimum distance from the old workings (i.e. 40 yards) at which narrow driving and bore-holes must be commenced.

At this point of my story it becomes necessary to digress in order to notice the circumstances of an accident that led to the next important step forward.

The flooding of the Caradog Vale colliery, Glamorgan, on 26th June, 1906, causing the loss of four lives, paved the way to a stricter interpretation of a mine official's responsibilities, a change in the wording of the Mines Act relating to water dangers, and a higher standard of surveying.

The agent and manager of the colliery were committed, on the Coroner's warrant, for trial on a charge of manslaughter. Very early in the trial the judge ruled that there was no case to go to the jury against the agent, and he was discharged. The learned judge said that as the agent had appointed a first-class certificated man to be manager of the mine, he was of opinion that the agent was perfectly innocent of culpable neglect of duty. (The agent nowadays does not get off so easily.) [1]

The next point of interest centred on the word "dangerous". When may an accumulation be dangerous? The manager had knowingly—from

[1] He must satisfy paras. 1, 2, and 3, subsection 1, of section 102 of the Coal Mines Act, 1911.

consideration of his plan—approached, without boring, within 22 yards of the old workings; and two experienced mining engineers [1] testified that, in their opinion, the procedure in this case was perfectly safe. But the plan proved to be inaccurate for, instead of 22 yards' distance between the old and the new workings, there was actually less than one yard where the water broke through. In defence it was held that the manager had accepted the plans from his predecessor in good faith, and had no reason to believe them wrong. The summing-up of the judge was favourable to the manager and he was acquitted.

Change in wording. The Act of 1887, section 49, rule 13, stipulated: "Where a place is likely to contain a dangerous accumulation of water . . ." The Act of 1911 (the present Act), section 68, reads: "Where any working has approached within 40 yards of a place containing or likely to contain an accumulation of water or other liquid matter . . ." It will be seen that any and every accumulation must now be considered dangerous; and, unless such places or workings have been examined and found free of water or other liquid matter, the precautions of narrow drivages and bore-holes must be observed.

Experience teaches. New legislation is based on experience, and seeks to remedy proved defects of the past. The gradual tightening up of safety precautions since 1850 will have been noticed; and some of the fatalities led directly to the framing of fresh regulations. The Kent sinking accident in 1897 resulted in the compulsory provision of ladders, in the case of pits being sunk through heavily watered strata, extending from

[1] Henry T. Wales and Thomas Griffiths.

the shaft bottom to the surface or other place of safety. Thus the men had a sporting chance for their lives in case of an inrush. Similarly, the many fatalities resulting from the inflow of moss, mud, sand, etc., from overlying beds are responsible for the General Regulations of 1920 to deal with such cases.

A sense of uneasiness which seemed to grow in intensity prompted the Secretary for Mines to appoint, in January, 1924, a Committee to investigate " Water dangers in Mines . . ., and to make recommendations ". Simultaneously an appeal was made to all coalowners and mining engineers to turn over to the safe custody of the Mines Department all plans of old workings in their possession. The response was very satisfactory. After 3½ years, the Committee issued their report in July, 1927, and made many recommendations as to plans, barriers, or dams, and methods of approach to old workings or wastes. At the time of writing these recommendations have not been implemented. Whether they will be embodied in the legislation which is bound to follow the Safety in Coal Mines report of 1938 remains to be seen.

The working of under-sea coal demands special precautions. Even in virgin ground, that is, where there are no old workings, it is necessary to guard against the water overhead. There must be a sufficient thickness of strata between the seam being worked and the sea bottom. There is no legal minimum thickness of cover fixed for the under-sea mines of Great Britain. But a limit is prescribed in the leases, and this limit varies between 40 and 80 yards. Sometimes, paradoxical as it may seem, the farther the working proceeds seaward the safer it is. This is so when seams of coal dip

seaward at a steeper rate than the sea deepens. For all under-sea workings, the depth of the sea at all points is ascertained from careful surveys; and also the nature of the sea floor, whether it is bare rock or consisting of loose material, e.g. sand, ooze, mud; with the thickness of such deposits.

The quantity of under-sea coal available and of workable thickness in this country is estimated at many thousand million tons. It occurs chiefly under the Firth of Forth; under the Irish Sea to an unknown distance from Whitehaven and Maryport in Cumberland; under the North Sea off Northumberland and Durham; and under Swansea Bay and Carmarthen Bay in South Wales.

This article would not be complete without considering the miner's reaction to a menace which is entirely beyond his control, and against which he is powerless to protect himself. Of his courage and daring in an emergency, when his fellow worker is in deadly peril, there is abundant proof. But a latent danger which is ever present might well affect his nerves were he to dwell upon it. That familiarity breeds contempt of danger holds good in his case. He is so inured to the perils that surround him that one more or less is neither here nor there. Miners in the St. Just mining district of Cornwall, following a rich lode too far, have bored into the sea bottom at a distance of four feet, and promptly plugged the hole. In stormy weather they heard the crashing of boulders hurled by the Atlantic waves.

> "And then the very rock hath rock'd
> And I have felt it shake unshock'd."

It was all in the day's work. In New South Wales the miners working under the tidal waters of the Pacific

heard the swish of the propellers as the steamers, leaving the wharfs, passed over them. The thud of an anchor dropped on to the sea bed was familiar and as unheeded as the sound of the steamers. The miners pay no heed to these and only become interested and alert when the noises are new and prolonged.

I know at least one instance where the miners repeatedly turned the threatened danger to good account. The colliery worked a coal seam to the rise towards a large area of old workings whose position was uncertain but known to be full of water. The cutting price per ton was good and the miners earned an excellent wage. This fact attracted others, until the mine became rather crowded. Mining men know well that, unless there is a general speeding-up, more men means fewer trams got by each man; and so earnings drop. Whereupon the old hands would start a discussion—in the hearing of the new-comers—about the water that lay in front. "Ay! God only knows where, but we'll bloody well find out when it's too late." The new men listened, scared; not relishing the prospect of death by drowning, left the mine hurriedly, leaving the old stagers triumphant and free to earn their usual good money. The miner's philosophy was well expressed by a waggish fellow who declared that it was all one to him whether he were smashed by a fall of roof, roasted in an explosion, or drowned by a flood; and each of them meant the same trouble to his wife in arranging the funeral. Allowing for over-emphasis, we sense in these remarks the stoicism that saves the miner from hours of sleeplessness through worries incidental to his day's work.

WOOD MOSAIC

Most English homes at one time contained among their household-objects, something, a stamp-box, pin-tray or paper-knife, made of many minute pieces of woods in various colours. In my own home there were a frame, the corners overlapping to form crosses, and a penholder. What happened to the frame I do not know. What happened to the pen, I do. It was replaced by the stylo, by the fountain-pen, by the type-writer. So I had forgotten the many woods of which it was made and it was only by chance that, walking through Rye, I came on them again. In that town, you would have expected the making of Tonbridge ware, as it is called, to have become one of "ye olde craftes". Miraculously, it hadn't. It was carried on in an open-fronted shop, with a few finished objects for sale on a table and the joiner at work on others at another. To look at and to talk to, he was all that a village blacksmith should be. Most Sussex blacksmiths now make ornamental iron-work. This man was one of the only two who now make Tonbridge ware. Save for the use of a circular saw in cutting the rough timber, everything is made by hand. No dyes and stains are used, pieces of various woods in their natural colours are combined to form mosaic things such as cuff-links or cigarette-boxes. Sometimes, the minute pieces of wood are formed into patterns. Thus a matchbox-cover has the design of a butterfly. It contained twelve hundred pieces of wood; a small brooch nearby had one hundred and sixty. The joiner told me he had a steady market, and that most of his sales came from goods sent on approval. I asked him if he were ever cheated of money. No, he said, the kind of people who like my kind of work don't seem to do that kind of thing.

FRAGILE WARE

By S. G. J. OUSELEY

IMAGINE YOURSELF IN the early morning in the streets of Stoke. The Pottery Corridor, with its seven miles of narrow uneven streets, is alive with rumbling vans and drays, the pavements are crowded with workers of both sexes, either going to work in the dismal factories, or returning to their equally dismal homes after labouring all night. The vans and drays are tightly and carefully packed with crates containing the famous products of the " pot-banks ", as the factories are called locally. These articles will travel to London, New York, Australia, India, and elsewhere, some to the millionaire's mansion, some to the little cottage or council house. Every piece of ware, however small or trifling in value, has necessitated the skill and care of some Harry of Hanley or some Betty of Burslem, the labour of the potter's art being shared by men and women.

To supply the universal demand for " china ", to use this specialized term in a general sense, six towns with a combined population of about 280,000 people, are kept busy day and night. The Five Towns of Arnold Bennett's novels are actually six, closely joined together and similar in character and appearance. In the squalid, begrimed, gardenless rows and terraces of Hanley, Burslem, Stoke, Tunstall, Fenton, and Longton, craftsmen and craftswomen, for generations past, have been born with that strange faculty or sense for working clay, and there they have died, sometimes victims of the industrial diseases which follow a life spent in the dingy workshops of the Potteries. Skill in the art is thus

handed down from father to son and from mother to daughter, but actually Harry or Betty may choose from about one hundred and fifteen different kinds of jobs connected with pottery manufacture. Many people spend their life doing one special task such as making saucers, sticking handles on cups and jugs, enamelling ware, or painting gold bands on crockery.

It is when you go inside a pot-bank that the hideousness of the streets leaves your mind, for from the moment you set your foot in the sticky puddles on the floor of the slip-house, where the clay is mixed, you feel in another world. The creation of a piece of china is inspiring and fascinating. From the designer to the kiln-man, who acts as the "midwife" to the finished product, each vase, ornament, or even tea-pot goes through a series of processes, or, I should say, a ceremonial that is essential and traditional. Of course, it must be admitted that even the most old-fashioned pot-bank is not proof against the invasion of machinery and labour-saving devices, but the individual craftsman is still the mainstay of the industry. Changes and improvements in the working conditions, however, are always welcome. For example, one of the best known pottery works in the world, the house of Josiah Wedgwood, is shortly to be transplanted from the site it has held for generations. Few tears will be shed because the district where it has stood so long is one of the foulest and unhealthiest in the Potteries. The new factory is being built on garden-city lines in a lovely spot in the open country some miles outside Stoke. The workers will live in specially-planned cottages with all modern comforts and amenities.

Life in a pot-bank, however up-to-date it may be,

would not appeal to everybody. The hours are long, the work is unhealthy, and the pay is none too high; yet often the potter is reluctant to leave the craft. It is not uncommon to find employees who have worked fifty years in one pot-bank, and many continue until extreme old age forces them to retire. A pot-bank demands attention, day and night—night work is very important as the fires must be kept at a constant temperature of about 1,100 degrees centigrade. Many of the employees work in stuffy, badly-ventilated rooms in which the air is laden with dust, but attention to the health is much to the fore at the present time.

At one time the industrial diseases of lead poisoning and silicosis took a heavy toll of lives in the Potteries. The glazing of earthenware used to bring the workers into close contact with compounds of lead, but to-day leadless glazes are almost universally used, with the result that lead poisoning is dying out. In Stoke in 1937 there were only eighteen cases of the disease—nine were fatal.

The worst scourge of the Potteries is silicosis, but it is now becoming less prevalent. This disease, also known as potter's asthma and lung rot, is caused by the breathing of silica, or flint dust, which is highly deleterious. The course of the disease is generally twenty years, during which time the lungs of the person affected become shrivelled and blackened to a degree that is hard to imagine. The lungs of silicotic sufferers become like pieces of coke. The silica dust is created during certain processes such as polishing, scouring, casting, sweeping, etc. For instance, in making an article of china it is inevitable that pieces of clay get dropped on the floor where they harden and are

eventually trampled on. Soon the atmosphere is laden with a fine dust and the danger of silicosis is then present.

The National Council of the Pottery Industry is doing its utmost to improve the working conditions by advocating the substitution of alundum for flint in polishing, the use of gridded floors so that falling scrap cannot be ground into dust, improved benches to prevent scrap falling down, the use of suction apparatus to rid the air of dust, and many other improvements. One gratifying result of the war against silicosis is the fact that to-day many silicotic sufferers, who, according to old standards, should not be alive, are now going on living and working. In the old days people suffering from silicosis seldom reached the age of forty, whereas to-day the average age of death from silicosis is fifty-eight. The latest figures show that forty-nine men and three women died from silicosis in 1938. Twenty-seven cases were men aged between fifty-one and sixty and fifteen between sixty-one and seventy. The three women were aged fifty-six, thirty-four, and thirty.

Whether the death-rate from silicosis will drop to the level of lead poisoning remains to be seen. There is encouraging evidence, however, that it will be materially reduced as the years go on. War against dust is being carried on with determination and success. Already Dust Safety Posters are to be seen in some works, dust warnings are printed on pay packets in others, and a booklet for issue to all pottery workers is being prepared.

Another big problem in the Potteries is the question of wages. Nowadays the wages of the workers are based on a standard mutually agreed upon by the Pottery Manufacturers' Federation and the Workers' Society. The standard varies from time to time but at the moment

the average wage of a large proportion of men is from 1*s.* 3*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per hour. It is very difficult to assess the average earnings on account of the numerous branches of the industry. There are about ten thousand men employed on highly skilled labour who receive 1*s.* 7*d.*, or so, per hour. The average wages of a woman are from 8*d.* to 9½*d.* per hour, and this rate applies to about eight thousand workers in all branches of the Potteries.

The piece-work rates of pay are very complicated. There are thousands of different articles made in the Potteries which are paid for at various rates, from a few pence to 5*s.* a dozen.

All things considered, there is a fairly happy relationship between the employers and the employed. Both sides work together with a sense of co-operation rather than an attitude of hostility. The fact that there has not been any important strike during the past thirty years show the general satisfaction of the worker with his lot. Another improvement which pottery manufacturers have everywhere adopted is the scheme of holidays with full pay.

Owing to the carelessness and lack of proper planning in the last century, housing conditions in the Potteries at first sight seem appalling. In the old districts there are rows and rows of small houses devoid of bathrooms and indoor lavatories. Sometimes there is only one tap in the house which has to serve the entire household for all purposes.

The housing problem, however, is being energetically tackled by the City Corporation which is now very active both as regards slum clearance and the provision of new accommodation for the workers.

Thousands of people have been housed on new estates in healthy districts on the outskirts of the city. The approaches to the Potteries are now lined with rows of council houses. A modern semi-detached cottage, equipped with the lastest electrical devices, can be rented for about 12*s*., including rates. Under the Five Years' Scheme nineteen areas have been dealt with comprising upwards of four thousand houses.

In addition to the grim army of three hundred smoking potteries—viewed from a distance they look like huge black bottles dropped higgledy-piggledy by gaint drinkers—there are several coal mines in the district. Whilst their presence adds to the pollution of the atmosphere they are really blessings in disguise, as they insure plenty of cheap coal. The horrors of the mines of North Staffordshire are now being considerably lessened by the provision in some pits of such improvements as pit-head baths for the miners. It is rare nowadays to see batches of men with faces as black as ebony rushing off homewards at the end of the day. The modern miner remains behind a few minutes to decarbonize himself instead of expecting his wife to assist him in the back kitchen.

The Potteries, as a district, cover a large area, so that it may take an hour to get from one end to the other. Strangely enough, even from the heart of the " City " you have glimpses of the open country. This is one of the compensations of Fate and for it the people are wholeheartedly grateful. The people are always ready to escape from their grim surroundings and such places as Trentham Park, Alton Towers, and other beauty spots in the vicinity are crowded in the summer months. The indigence of many of the people, however,

is such that an evening outing costing a few pence is a luxury beyond their means. Yet it is nonetheless a fact that by dint of hard scraping there are very few people who are unable to participate in the annual exodus during " Wakes " week. Then train after train and bus after bus leaves Stoke, packed with potters' and miners' families. Their destinations are always the same—Blackpool, Rhyl, New Brighton, Colwyn Bay, or Llandudno.

The people of North Staffordshire have certain definite characteristics and customs. Everything about the Potteries strikes one as being on a small scale—the pottery chimneys average fifty feet—so it is not surprising to find the natives, on the whole, short in stature. The work and environment does not seem adapted to the tall and heavy, but seems intended for a wiry and virile race accustomed to hard work. In spirit they seem more akin to Lancashire than any other part. Their accent suggests a mild dose of Cottonopolis and their " Pottery talk " would be understood by any mill lassie. At meals, also, anyone born in Lancashire would feel at home, whereas a Southerner wonders if he has arrived in a foreign country.

The food shops of the Potteries reflect the dietetic peculiarities of the people. More meat (especially bacon and meat-pies), cheese, and " chips " are consumed here than in the south. Special shops exist for making special dainties known as oatcakes and pikelets, which are eaten in enormous quantities with bacon and black sausage.

In the Potteries a good appetite seems necessary in order to live. In the old days, the fact of being born in Stoke meant a struggle against the most deadly foes of life and health—foul air, smoke, fumes, bad housing,

epidemics, and insanitation. Solid food was the only basis of life, and the habit of heavy eating thus became rooted in the people's minds. In these days the living conditions are gradually improving. Modern houses are springing up everywhere, smoke-abatement is being applied to the factories, disease is being combated, with the result that the drab rows of small, cell-like dwellings, devoid of gardens and bathrooms, are slowly becoming extinct.

In spite of all the difficulties and unpleasant factors of life in the Potteries the people are extremely cheerful, light-hearted, and sympathetic. They never fail to appreciate such things as good music, good plays, and good sport. During the crisis of September last, when people in London trembled every time they bought a newspaper " special ", scores of Pottery men felt equally anxious, not whether war was declared, but whether Stanley Matthews, the local football idol, was to be transferred or not. On Saturdays in the season nothing else matters as much as the duel that is fought out on the hallowed football ground in the presence of thirty thousand cold-blooded spectators. The appearance of a football star calls forth more popular acclamation than would a visit by the Lords of the Admiralty.

THE LONG MAN

Some urchins who recently damaged the Long Man on the Downs near Wilmington were severely reprimanded by the magistrate. Not without reason. The Long Man is not only a pre-historic carving, it is also the largest representation of the human figure in the world. Owing to its position on the sloping hill, its outlines tend to be washed away by the rains, and they have therefore been filled in with bricks, painted white to match the original chalk. Some of these bricks the boys removed and threw down the Downs (that, of course, being what stones found on tops of hills are for). There is no doubt they should be discouraged, but if they are expected to venerate the old as well as Long Man, might they not also be told something about him? I myself was at school for four years nearby, but though he would have been an excellent object-lesson in history, no hint of his existence was ever given us, and I had never seen him until two years ago. Deciding to repair that damage, and also to see what the boys had caused, I climbed up the other day. A notice-board asks you to treat the Long Man with respect. It gives no other information. Nothing to stir any interest, satisfy desire for knowledge, let alone stir any spark of imagination. There he is, two thousand or more years old, two hundred and thirty feet long, the biggest figure of a human being in the world. But no word of that on the notice-board.

Is it inapposite to remark that in Finland and Estonia, you find on the boards by antiquities, brief data not only in the language of the country, but in that of at least four others as well?

A MAN'S LIFE

By WILLY GOLDMAN

A "MAN'S" LIFE begins so early in the East End that at fifteen you already feel the urge for a more sophisticated kind of entertainment than promenading the broad Whitechapel pavement of an evening and nudging the passing girls. You try to give a variation to the sex-hunt. In my time—as is still the case to-day—this took the form of the dance-hall on Saturday night. It was a gratifying change after the perpetual importuning in the Whitechapel Road. Here you were, as a male and a potential "partner", at a premium. It was a pleasant reversal of roles. Instead of casting hopelessly yearning glances at desirable but inaccessible females, you now went boldly and confidently for your choice. Any girl in the place was yours provided you could dance. It was entirely up to you. As an added inducement you had the knowledge that any girl you danced with could be escorted home later on and cuddled for an hour or so in some back turning.

The week-ends were the high peaks. Every time a different girl to escort home. You gained in this way an extensive acquaintance with the topography of the district. You learned to know the back turnings as well as the prostitutes for whom it was a professional duty.

On each Sunday following a dance we met at the street corner after a late breakfast to discuss the previous night's fun. We inquired sympathetically into each other's "luck". Each insisted on the superior physical attributes of his own particular partner. Nobody had any "complaints" to make; such an admission would

have implied the possession of an inferior brand of sex-appeal. There *was* some grumbling, but it was of a facetious sort and came from people with so high a reputation for " successes " that it implicitly flattered rather than discredited them. Sol Levine, for instance, our local lady-killer, was by his own account dogged by a peculiar " bad luck " that derived from extraneous and not local sources: he invariably discovered that his partner lived in a tenement—which in itself, he agreed, was a promising beginning. The snag lay, however, in that these tenements always turned out to be of the smaller kind whose gates were locked at midnight, and whose inhabitants made it a strict dictum for their daughters to be indoors by then: with the consequence that Sol continually found himself having to take a hurried parting at the very moment when his spirits were at their liveliest. . . .

Attending dances regularly had its disadvantages: you were liable to be thought soft, and labelled " dancing-boy ". To avoid this danger you had to supplement your dancing with pursuits of a more " manly " kind. That was where the billiard saloon came in. You couldn't be thought soft once you were known to " hang out " there: it was the resort of the roughest and toughest.

Our favourite one was two minutes' distant. It called itself the *Belgrave Temperance and Social Club*, but it was just a billiard hall. You entered by swing doors from the street. It was a large, square-shaped room, filled with rows upon rows of green-covered tables, except for a canteen at the far end and two or three small card-tables dotted around. The walls were distempered, and crowded on all four sides with photographs of

sporting celebrities. High above all was a small dusty notice—*Gambling is Prohibited*—that you didn't discover until your umpteenth visit, and then only if you possessed exceptionally good eyesight. The notice had to be there by law. But the forsaken corner chosen for it showed that the proprietors had their own method of combating Authority.

The habitués fitted in well with the setting. You might have thought it had been designed with their connivance and even supervision. They were as tough as anything depicted in American gangster films, except that they didn't carry guns. They were none the less armed for that. They were wise enough to know that razors are as effective as guns and make less noise.

We were a little " out of it " on our first visit. Most people there were well-acquainted with each other, and consorted in cliques, or " gangs ". This didn't necessarily imply rivalry. It was merely the division of groups with separate interests. Those who " did " the racecourses for a living bunched together ; likewise the promoters of graft in the professional boxing business, and the petty thieves who put each other on " a good thing ". The whole was an unconscious parody of the medieval Trade Guilds.

Quarrels of a sort did, of course, break out sometimes. These were exclusively between gangs who worked the same racket, one of whom had been infringing on the other's ground. There was no drawing-room finesse about these quarrels. Word-play was almost entirely absent, or cut down to a monosyllabic minimum. *Violence* was the watchword from first to last. You had hardly a moment to make yourself scarce before you were caught up in a shambles : there were curses,

a flash of razors, a fusing of lights—and people were trampling you down on their way to the door.

After this initiation into the habits of the saloon "boys", we devised our own method of protection. For ever afterwards we made a point of choosing the table for our game as near the exit as possible . . .

You quickly learned who were most to be feared. They were easy to memorize once they had been pointed out. Usually it was those with the most badly-gashed faces. The saloon "boys" collected razor wounds with the same pride that the old Heidelberg students collected sabre cuts from their duels. These were reputedly the most reckless. Nobody cared to risk a private quarrel with them—not even the "pugs" who sometimes came in for a game: for what use are fists, no matter how scientifically manipulated, against one who can use a razor with the ease and dexterity of a surgeon? You had proof of this in the kind of casualties the "razor boys" inflicted. They never killed anybody outright. They knew with uncanny exactness how to time a swift stroke that scarcely skimmed your face, but all the same kept you indoors for a month.

Youngsters like ourselves, with no particular "racket", found we had least to fear from the razor toughs. They were very carefree and jovial when not absorbed in discussing a "scheme". We grew ever more friendly with them—in the tentative way you get friendly with a lion. They were unusually generous. Beggars who dropped in on them never departed empty-handed. As for the visiting representative of a "deserving charity"—he never had to do any collecting at all: the "boys" took it right over from him and brought back a heavily rattling box in five minutes.

When in funds they opened their purses to the world. Making a " packet " down at the racecourse, or doing a " good job " in a less lawful quarter filled them with an exuberance that had to find its outlet in munificence. They would " treat " any and every stranger who crossed their path. Most marked of all was the pity they showed for a wanderer " down on his luck ", especially if he turned out to be a " Yiddisher boy " : this touched them almost to the point of tears—these profligates who had outraged and renounced every respectable dictum of Jewry !

They undoubtedly had a sneaking regard for the underdog. They themselves were underdogs in a complex sort of way. There was scarcely one of them who hadn't somewhere in the district relations who had disowned him. They were the outcasts and " untouchables " of Ghetto Jewry—having preferred crime with its uncertainties to the dreary " safety " of their parents' lives. They were unconscious anarchists. Each man for himself was their motto, and all hands against Society. Amongst God-fearing Jews their names were mentioned only in the most opprobious terms. They had put themselves outside the family ; and the family for Jews is a sacred unit : it is the one element they have managed to preserve and keep intact amid the slow, advancing disintegration of the race.

The " boys ", in action, testified to the accuracy of this diagnosis. They were the most cynical set of people you were likely to meet anywhere. They scorned anything that was foreign to their own particular code of living. If something " different " caught their eye in a stranger at the " hall " they would chaff him to the

point of desperation. Their humour was of a childish sort: they mimicked and derided anything that wasn't like themselves. And they had an almost Olympian contempt for human beings. They would restrain themselves for nobody. Even when they lolled outside the billiard hall in the warm weather, and their loud talking brought complaints from a neighbour about their "language", they would turn and abuse her almost to the point of violence.

They were like a strange, wild rabble let loose in an ordered society—but they revealed one trait that showed their intrinsic affinity with that Society. This was a peculiar reverence for the elderly. If an old Jew crossed their path and "let them have it strong", they held their mouths—no matter the provocation. This was the one childhood instinct they had never been able to eradicate. Abuse of the very elderly is for Jews a sin no amount of penance can redeem. I suppose it is a heritage from the old Patriarchal days. I have rarely seen this dictum broken. On the occasions when it was, you expected to see the offender struck down by an unseen hand in his tracks. He was certainly considered beyond redemption. Reverence for the elderly was the one thing we as children preserved in the face of all our other tattered values. Had this been otherwise then my own grandfather, who was an incorrigible persecutor of the children who played outside his window, would long before have been massacred in a popular uprising of the local urchins. Only his beard saved him from this.

The saloon "boys", like all other Jews, are more shocked when they read of an old Jew in Germany having his beard pulled or being molested in the street

by Nazi youths than by any of the larger atrocities: those history has taught us to expect. But the other is a blow at the very heart of our traditional dignity. It will be remembered against the Nazis when their other crimes have faded from the records.

It was at this time that there was a shaping of the racial division in our youthful street society. With the disappearance of childhood, tradition was asserting itself. The Gentiles and ourselves were getting the habits of our elders. This does not mean that our modes of living were fundamentally inimical; we merely did things with our own sort of people and in our own places. We both haunted billiard halls, for instance, but in separate spheres. It was the same with dance-halls. Our favourite was the People's Palace in Mile End; the Gentiles preferred theirs in places like Elephant and Castle—where the presence of one of our people would be sure eventually to provoke a "rough-house". The Gentiles didn't like us dancing with "their" girls. It is a fact beyond dispute that a Jew could always attract a Gentile girl more easily than could her co-religionist. The same was rarely apparent in the reverse. The Gentile cut very little ice with the Jewish girl. This is probably the reason why the Jews didn't resent an occasional Gentile who attended their dance-hall: they knew he would have a pretty thin time of it. A Jew, however, attending one of their halls would, by a combination of good dancing, cheek, and sexual aggressiveness, walk home with the most attractive girl in the place—if they let him get that far.

It was only in the sphere of sport—where there is a reversion to the childhood element—that the racial

ratio evened itself up. Attendance at football games and boxing halls was pretty mixed; although again in the latter sport when a Jew opposed a Gentile, racial preferences superseded all sporting considerations and made it certain that whoever finally triumphed in the ring, the real battle would be fought out in the stalls afterwards.

There was only one thing that could submerge racial pride, and that was local pride. It happened when young George Perks at the age of sixteen blossomed out as a pugilist. To all of us—Jew and Gentile alike—he was a "Welk Street boy". It was true that occasionally we underwent a bit of conscience-wrangling when he was matched with a Jew, but local patriotism eventually triumphed over the racial brand. It was something closer to our daily life.

We were very proud of him. He was one of our company in several jaunts to the billiard hall, and people there who were perfect strangers called out, "Howya, George!" We kept very close to him. When he took part in our game the others came round and watched. We felt consciously tougher, as if with his presence we shared some of his prowess. We played our cues like bored, sullen gangsters, and looked round aggressively after each hit. We were almost in the frame of mind of starting a "rough-house".

LONDON IN YOUR POCKET

Marjorie Quennell's London Craftsman *is one of the sixpenny booklets issued by London Transport in the series which gives the heading to this paragraph.* London Craftsman, *by one of the authors of* A History of Everyday Things, *is a guide to the museums having relics of old trades; as such it is a model from which many arty authors of books on crafts might well benefit. Readers benefit not only by learning of trades and crafts, but also of many museums insufficiently delighted in—not only the Horniman and Cuming, but Bethnal Green Museum, the Geffrye Museum, Walthamstow Museum (the first British motor car), Tottenham Museum (Rowland Hill's postal-history collection). The book has two dozen photographs, one of which is of a jigsaw-puzzle of 1830 (the Liverpool and Manchester railway). Other volumes in the same series are* Serious Pleasures *by George Buchanan, and Elizabeth Montizambert's* London Adventure *(illustrated by Raymond McGrath). Slightly coy, this latter should nevertheless be a godsend to those who, finding themselves taking nephews, nieces or indeed any small children on holiday tours of London, wish to advance a little further than the usual round of the Zoo, Mme Tussaud's, and the Tower. The chapters deal with expeditions undertaken with a definite object—tracing sites of battles, scientific discovery, the stories behind street names. One chapter, called "Foreign Travel", is devoted to traces of America in London. Another is a following in the footsteps of Elizabeth, starting with her birthplace in the Palace of Placentia, Greenwich, and ending at her deathplace, the Royal Palace of Sheen. These booklets are admittedly designed to assure plentiful use of London Transport;*

it is not at all their idea that we should sit in one place all day. Nevertheless, they could scarcely have been better designed and are a form of advertising in which taste and intelligence are most pleasingly present. They are excellent both for Londoners, who rarely know anything of their city, and for visitors, who usually find it one which does not advertise its less obvious attractions.

BRITISH MUSEUMS

By F. D. KLINGENDER

THERE ARE MORE than five hundred museums and art galleries in Britain. Some contain no more than a case of stuffed birds, some flints, a " native idol " or two, and perhaps a set of local prints. Others are treasure stores of fascinating objects. Some are neglected, their moth-eaten exhibits falling to pieces for lack of proper care. Others are well-staffed and fully-equipped modern educational institutions. Some date from the seventeenth century, others from the last decade.

It would be difficult to find among them a single one that did not contain something of interest—and often of irreplacable value as a historical document, although no one knows of its existence. All of them could become centres of intellectual, artistic, and educational life in their respective localities. The wealth of artistic and scientific treasures scattered up and down the country is far greater than most people imagine. Yet the contribution which our local museums could make towards enriching the interests and the understanding of the people has hitherto only been very imperfectly realized.

About half of the existing museums were founded before the end of the nineteenth century. But they differ in an important respect from many famous Continental collections formed in the same period. The latter were often assembled for the amusement of princes or with the object of enhancing the magnificence of some court. The early museums of this country reflect the enthusiasm of the merchant adventurers and of the rising industrial middle-class for the conquest of nature. " The end of

our foundation is the knowledge of causes and secret motions of things; and the enlarging of the bounds of human empire, to the affecting of all things possible." Thus Bacon described the museum of his dreams, " Solomon's House," in the *New Atlantis*.

The first real museum in Britain dates from Bacon's time. It was the collection of natural objects and antiquities made in Lambeth by the Tradescants, father and son, and later acquired by Elias Ashmole, who bequeathed it to the University of Oxford. Also from Bacon's time dates the Cotton Collection of historical documents and manuscripts, which forms the original stock of the British Museum Library. Bacon's motive of " enlarging the bounds of human empire " is evident in both these collections. Attached to the former was a botanical garden in which the Tradescants acclimatized many new plants brought from distant places. Cotton used his library to provide the leaders of parliament with historical evidence in their struggle against the royal prerogative on the eve of the Puritan Revolution. Charles I, fearing the power of " dangerous ideas ", had Cotton framed before the Star Chamber and sealed up the library until its owner was lying on his death-bed.

With the British Museum itself we move into the sphere where Bacon's programme found its first organized application. Sir Hans Sloan, physician and naturalist, whose collection, when left to the nation, became the British Museum, was a successor of Newton as president of the Royal Society. He had inherited many of his treasures from William Courten, descendant of a Flemish emigré and grandson of one of the greatest merchant adventurers of the early Stuart period.

During the later eighteenth century Scotland became

the centre of British science and the intellectual herald of the industrial revolution. At Glasgow University taught Adam Smith, the philosophers Hutcheson and Fergussen, and the physicist Black, the precursor of modern chemistry, in whose laboratory James Watt made his first experiments. Glasgow had also one of the foremost medical schools in the country. One of its members was Dr. William Hunter, who bequeathed his collection of natural specimens, scientific instruments, antiquities, and pictures to the University in 1783. Enriched by many documents illustrating the educational principles and social activities of the Adam Smith circle, this collection remains to this day a monument to one of the most important groups of men in the history of British civilization. Equally thrilling is the light which the Hunterian Museum throws on the artistic preferences of this circle: with many Dutch naturalists and sentimental Italian romantics, like Salvator Rosa or Reni, it contains three of the best Chardins in this country.

The scientific movement of the nineteenth century had its roots, not in the stagnant feudal universities, but in the new centres of industrial England. In the decades about 1800 philosophical and literary societies, subscription libraries, or scientific institutions, were flourishing in Newcastle, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Bristol, Norwich, and numerous other cities. Among their most active members were men such as Roebuck, Wedgwood, Boulton, Watt, Stevenson—the pioneers of modern industry. And they maintained as experimentalists, lecturers, or demonstrators men who like Priestly, Dalton, Humphrey Davy, were the founders of modern science. Many a local museum in

Britain owes its origin to a group of this kind. Where, as is often the case, the original collections can still be identified, they are documents of outstanding interest. For this period was one of the great turning points in our civilization. Since Bacon's day science had progressed to the point where it could in fact proceed " to the effecting of all things possible ". The new industrial middle class eagerly pushed ahead to the conquest of the world. Exalted in the consciousness of its historic mission, it still endeavoured to comprehend reality as a whole. Although specialization in industry and science was the inevitable outcome of this new stage, it did not as yet narrow the vision of its pioneers. They were as keenly interested in literature, the arts, history, and archæology, as in political economy and in the natural sciences.

In Liverpool, for example, one of the intellectual leaders was the banker William Roscoe (1753–1831). Although his business failed in 1816, he was elected first president of the Liverpool Royal Institution in the following year. He sponsored the study of scientific agriculture and was a co-founder of the Botanical Garden. He wrote verse and historical biographies of Lorenzo Medici and Pope Leo X. He had been associated with societies for the encouragement of the arts and had organized exhibitions of paintings since the age of twenty. He collected books, prints, and pictures to illustrate " the Rise and Progress of the Art of Painting ", and was interested in " Literature, Science, and Art " from the point of view of " their influence on the present State of Society ". His pictures, one of the most interesting collections of old masters in the provinces, now form the nucleus of the Walker Art Gallery.

But the first quarter of the nineteenth century was

not only an age of scientists and collectors ; it was the creative period par excellence of the British middle class. It produced a great literature and an important school of painters. The Norwich School of realist landscape artists, from Old Crome to Constable, is one of the supreme glories of British art, foreshadowing the modern movement in painting. Norwich Castle, with its magnificent collection of finished works, sketches, and drawings, is the only place where this group of artists can be studied as a whole.

From about the middle of the nineteenth century onwards a change is notable in the character of the museums which were founded in ever increasing numbers. With the new wealth of the industrialists and with their social assimilation to the old ruling classes, they tended to loose their progressive spirit of scientific adventure. They strove to outbid the aristocracy in luxury and display. The motive of " enlarging the bounds of human empire " gave way to the desire for flattery as " patrons of art ". There now appeared the numerous assemblies of expensive bric-a-brac and masterpieces collected by dealers or wealthy clients. Wallace, the illegitimate son of the fourth Marquess of Hertford, emulated the sensuous luxury of eighteenth-century Versailles. The soap-king, Leverhulme, a patron of the Victorian academicians, collected Napoleon relics (he also assembled an important Wedgwood collection, thus paying tribute to one who was more truly his predecessor).

Numerous bequests were made to national and local museums on condition that the objects presented should never be separated, regardless of the fact that they would thus cut across the general scheme of arrangement.

In the minds of their donors the motive of self-display had, clearly, replaced the former enthusiasm for discovering the " causes and secret motions of things ". (Other benefactors insisted that their gifts should not be displayed on Sundays. To preserve the sanctity of the Sabbath, little curtains were drawn before these exhibits on the only day on which most people can visit a museum !)

Although they were past their prime, the numerous provincial societies still continued to flourish during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Their collections. reflect the growing specialization and the classificatory aim of nineteenth-century science. It was now that our local musuems were filled with those cases upon cases of stuffed birds and butterflies, which make one marvel that there are any living birds or insects left in these isles. But many such collections of local fossils, minerals, botanical specimens, prehistoric implements, etc., and many ethnological collections presented by returned explorers or missionaries, are of great scientific interest.

Two of our great national institutions mark the climax of this movement. The Victoria and Albert Museum, the heritage of the Great Exhibition of 1851, is a gigantic sample shop for the " art industry " which the sponsors of that exhibition hoped to revive. There the enterprising manufacturer (like Faudel and Phillips, who in 1851 exhibited a " State Bed, in every style of needle-work, from original designs . . . by Raffaele, in the Vatican, and copies from the Aurora of Guido. Reni, and Night by Thorwaldsen . . . The bedstead is . . in the style of Louis Quatorze ") can study Raphael's cartoons, scupltures by Michelangelo, Constable's sketches, Chinese mandarins' cloaks, medieval book

illuminations, and the knick-knacks of the Pompadour, all classified in their appropriate "trades" of metal, wood, needlework, painting, carving, printing, etc. But the Victoria and Albert Museum also organized the first national scheme for loan exhibitions to local museums, issued an excellent series of cheap picture books, and assembled one of the best art libraries in the country.

The Natural History Department of the British Museum, established as a separate institution in 1881, is a gigantic object lesson in classificatory science. It is also a centre for current research to complete the description of the natural world. But at the same time its original arrangement embodied an idea which was the germ of the modern educational museum. The walls of the entrance hall were divided into cubicles in which the course of natural evolution was demonstrated by means of a few selected specimens.

It is this emphasis on connecting principles, rather than on isolated details, which characterizes the best of our modern museums. At the same time the old overcrowded galleries are replaced by spacious display in which models, charts, maps, and photographs illustrate the significance of the original specimens. The new Geological Museum is the outstanding institution of this type. But there are many excellent examples elsewhere, from the Horniman Museum of 1901 to the recently completed Norfolk Room in Norwich Castle.

There has been much improvement also in some of our historical and art collections. Many of the more interesting examples are "period" or "memorial" houses recapturing the original setting of some period of the past or the domestic environment of some

distinguished personality. There are also a few excellent museums devoted to the history of a national or local industry, e.g. the new Navy Museum at Greenwich, the shipping collections at Liverpool, Glasgow, and Hull, the industrial museum at Norwich, and, above all, the Science Museum. But apart from the specialized technological collections, the interest of the historical museums is often abstract or sentimental. Their exhibitions are either historically "correct" reconstructions of "period rooms" or miscellaneous assemblies of "bygones". Nowhere is there an attempt to reveal the underlying principles and the driving forces of social development as a whole for any period later than Stonehenge. Our best historical museums cannot rival our scientific collections in clarity and consistency of aim, for they lack the underlying unity of an approach comparable to the theory of evolution.

EDWARD CAPERN

Ninety or so years ago there was walking the Devonshire country a postman who was also a poet. For his walking, thirteen miles a day from Bideford to Buckland Brewer, he received ten shillings a week (of seven days): for his poetry, he won the praise of Tennyson and Landor, among others. But his name is not to be found in the National Dictionary of Biography, *and, until this summer, his poems had for long been out of print. His nature-pieces are in the manner of the time, but now and again there shines through a spirit which was not so circumscribed. His* Song of the Littleham Hop-Pickers *has, when one considers the end of hops, a neat turn with its "wreathing our brows with the flowers And taxing our lips for their fee", and others besides postmen can respond to his*

> *"Heavy at heart and weary, O.*
> *Heigho! Heigho!*
> *Does anyone pray for the postman? NO.*
> *No! No! No! No!*
> *Or he would not be robbed of his Sunday so."*

Most genuine of all, however, is his Affection's Argument, *in which the beauty of an evening bids him ask his wife, that "gentle labourer", to leave her domestic duties and renew the pleasures of their youth. The poems quoted occur in a selection put out by the Bellman Press, of Bristol, under the title* The Postman's Poems, *and though the majority are, as the editor of them says, "spotted with antimacassar adjectives," they well repay the attention of the scholar and lover of the by-paths of English literature.*

RICHARD SAVAGE, THE FIRST POET OF COLOUR

By JACK LINDSAY

RICHARD SAVAGE LIVES in the Life by Samuel Johnson, but as a poet he is dead, with no hope of a resurrection. One line of his ("No tenth transmitter of a foolish face") from his vigorous *The Bastard* has passed into circulation, and that is all. Yet a reading of his poems will show that he had more to express than a third-rate version of contemporary themes of satire and panegyric. In one respect he reveals powerfully the first impact of influences which were to shatter the Augustan stereotype. He had an extraordinary sense of colour, which differentiates him from the other poetasters of his own and the succeeding generations. Through this sense he leaps over the heads of even Collins, Gray, the Wartons, Thomson, and others who were to start off the dissolution of the stereotype's hard edges with nuances and flittering lights of suggestion in rhythm and imagery, and clear the way for Blake, Coleridge, and Keats.

So, though Savage cannot expect to be read in entirety again, he deserves to have attention paid to some of the passages showing the rich new coloration which he imported into the set imagery of the Augustan couplet.

First, some instances of a crude force in the use of the colour-epithet:

> This casts the silver splendour of the moon . . .
> While the red scene with raging slaughter glares . . .
> Or when the sun walks forth in flaming gold . . .

Till these red ruptures clear the sullied sky . . .
Red massacres through their republic fly . . .

(The last line merely describes spaniels in a rabbit warren.) In the next two instances one sees an application of this method to the abstraction:

Here Contemplation learns white hours to find . . .
[The stream] winds out in silver state
Like virtue from the labyrinth of fate.

The last image describes a stream suddenly breaking out in foam round a corner after going a tangled course through marshy reeds.

Next we see how he uses this strong sense of colour in effects of contrast:

There the green fruits seemed ripening into gold . . .
Vistas with leaves diversify the scene,
Some pale, some brown, and some of lively green . . .
Springs with soft heats no more give borders green
Nor smoking breathe along the whitened scene . . .
The reddening berry deep-tinged holly shows,
And matted mistletoe the white bestows . . .
olive bowers green
Where, clothed in white, thou show'st a mind serene . . .

His use of this contrast-effect often displays a keen and individual sense of nature:

Grey leafless wood, and winter-greens between . . .
Lead-coloured clouds, in scattering fragments seen,
Show, though in broken views, the blue serene . . .
Wild thyme, pale box, and firs of darker green . . .
The green grass yellowing into scentful hay.

That here we have a poet who, though using a stereotype of diction, is speaking out of experience, we cannot doubt :

> Sloped up white rocks, small yellow harvests grow,
> And green on terraced stages vineyards blow.

If he had done no more, Savage would have recorded in lines like these a new sensibility, and could be justly hailed as the forerunner of the Romantics. But his insight into landscape, his subtle handling of effects of light and colour, go much further. Who, before him, brought this kind of accent and image into the couplet ?

> The falling moon cast, cold, a quivering light,
> Just silvered o'er the snow, and sunk.

The following examples will show his preoccupation with light-effects, the way in which he transmuted a set idiom into a method for expressing an individual vision of earth and sun :

> Gleams in the lake and gilds each glossy flower . . .
> As swift again each pointed flame retires . . .
> Now from yon range of rocks strong rays rebound,
> Doubling the day on flowery plains . . .
> King-cups beneath far-striking colours glance ;
> Bright as the ethereal glows the green expanse.
> Gems of the field ! the topaz charms the sight,
> Like those effulging yellow streams of light . . .
> And the lawn lightens with reflected fires . . .
> Gay insects sparkle in the genial blaze,
> Various as light, and countless as its rays.
> They dance on every stream and pictured play . . .
> Twixt ferns and thistles unsown flowers amuse,

And fan a lucid chase of various hues;
Many half grey with dust . . .
[Sun and sea] Where all his labours in mosaic shine . . .
There, beamed from sapphires, living azure plays;
The crystal dome transparent pillars raise . . .

He is deeply attracted by all quick sharp effects of light:

The foaming deep in sparkles seem to burn.

He poetically anticipates Gainsborough, Constable, and Turner. Nor will this seem too big a claim when the following passages are considered, in which he develops his analysis of light-effects over a larger area:

The sun's uprolled,
The expansive grey turns azure chased with gold.
White-glittering ice, changed like the topaz, gleams,
Reflecting saffron lustre from his beams.

South-west, beyond yon hill, the sloping sun
To ocean's verge his fluent course has run;
His parting eyes a watery radiance shed,
Glance through the vale and tip the mountain's head,
To which opposed the shadowy gulfs below,
Beauteous, reflect the party-coloured snow . . .

. . . a vaporous gathering rolled;
In blue round spot on the mid-roof it came,
Spread broad and reddened into dazzling flame:
Full-orbed it shone and dimmed the swimming sight
While doubling objects danced with darkling light . . .

And here is a description of the moon coming up through a sunset haze, in which an imaginative clarity struggles with a dead idiom:

Up the blue steep her crimson orb now shines,
Now on the mountain-top her arm reclines,

In a red crescent seen. Her zone now gleams
Like Venus quivering in reflecting streams;
Yet reddening, yet round burning up the air,
From the white cliff her feet slow-rising glare.
See, flames condensed now vary her attire,
Her face a broad circumference of fire:
Dark firs seem kindled in nocturnal blaze;
Through ranks of pines her broken lustre plays;
Here glares, there brown-projecting shade bestows,
And glittering sports upon the spangled snows.
Now silver turn her beams . . .

Who has happened when a poet using the Augustan couplet can write, "Yet reddening, yet round burning up the air?" And here are two more passages to show how consciously he delighted in the interplay of colours:

Others take faint the unripened cherry's dye
And paint amusing landscapes on the eye;
Their blue-veined yellow through a sky serene
In swelling mixture forms a floating green;
Streaked through white clouds a mild vermilion shines
And the breeze freshens as the day declines.

Thus he sees the rainbow:

Arch above arch in radiant order bend . . .
From the red convex of the dewy bow . . .
The flaming red that pains the dwelling gaze,
The stainless lightsome yellow's gilding rays,
The clouded orange, that betwixt them glows,
And to kind mixture tawny lustre owes;
All-cheering green, that gives the spring its dye,
The bright transparent blue, that robes the sky,
And indigo, which shaded light displays,
And violet which in the view decays:
Parental hues, whence others all proceed,
An ever-mingling, changeful, countless breed,
Unravelled, variegated, lines of light,
When blended dazzling in promiscuous white.

And here are some scattered instances of his fresh way in general of treating nature :

> The landscape varied at each lessening end . . .
> [Waters] shape through rustling reeds a ruffled way . . .
> Rain clouds that sadden all the inverted year . . .
> Full in the midst start up a silky shade . . .
> Project long shaggy points deep-tinged with gold . . .

The last line gives an effect of rocks against the sunset. Consider this for a poet of Pope's world :

> Desolate the view,
> Where haunts the bittern and where screams the mew.

Or this for an effect of wintering loss :

> the transient glow, remote and lost,
> Decays and darkens 'mid the involving frost.

Or this for another sharply seen winter landscape :

> On this bleak height tall firs, with ice-work crowned,
> Bend, while their flaky winter shades the ground ;
> Hoarse, and direct, a blustering north-wind blows ;
> On boughs, thick-rustling, crack the crispèd snows ;
> Tangles of frost half fright the wildered eye . . .

Or this for the summer world :

> The bean fresh blossoms in a speckled flower,
> Whose morning dews, when to the sun resigned,
> With undulating sweets embalm the wind . . .
>
> Now daisy plats of clover square the plain
> And part the bearded from the beardless grain.

These passages alone surely secure for Savage an honourable place as an innovator, a disruptor of the

Augustan stereotype. On examination, his dominating sense of a new intensity of light and colour will be found related to the scientific movement of his day, the research in optics and astronomy, the theories of atomic constructions and light-movement. The passage quoted above about the rainbow shows his interest in prismatic analysis; and he makes clear at several points that he is aware of the relation between the scientific experiments and his imagery:

> Hence light refracted runs through distant skies,
> Changeful on azure plains in quivering dyes.

He discusses how "in conic form the gelid crystal grows", and after describing the light-effects of chandeliers ("as play on yonder snows the changeful rays") he goes to the "nobler use"—"if tubes perspective hem the spotless prize. . . . Measure known stars and new remoter spy: Hence Commerce may a shortened journey steer." He thus links up the scientific work with its social application and source. In his *The Animalcule* he develops imagery on inoculation and the microscopic analysis of tissue; in *The Employment of Beauty* he diversifies the old fancy of building up the admired woman's body, by doing it in terms of atomism. ("Come, purest Atoms.") He draws imagery of light from industrial process:

> the glowing mass
> Brightens, and, brightening, hardens into glass.

(And also draws it from, and returns it to, art. For him, in sculpture, "shadowed light a rounding force bestows"; in paintings, "half-circling glories shot in rays of gold"; and Beauty "throws kind lustre o'er the enlivened green.")

We see, then, that this inrush of brilliant imagery in his work is no freak ; it is based deeply in the productive life of his era. Emphatically he reiterates that the scientific movement is in turn based in the political and social movement into liberty :

> From Liberty each noble science sprung,
> A Bacon brightened and a Spenser sung ;
> A Clarke and Locke new trails of truth explore,
> And Newton reaches heights unreached before.

This attitude is linked with an attack on bigotry. " Whole nations bleed when bigotry prevails." With an insistence that the productive advance depends on liberty and peace :

> Here golden Commerce views her wealth increase,
> The blissful child of Liberty and Peace.

And, more strikingly original still, with a firm declaration that Beauty is dependent on Industry :

> By Industry is all with Beauty crowned.

It is worth while noting further than in *Of Public Spirit* he makes a forceful appeal for a public fostering of the arts. Public Spirit answers Ambition :

> While nations to depopulate is thine.
> To people, culture, and protect, be mine.

" And much she welcomes all, but most the poor." Again, to show his strong feeling for Science we may quote from *To John Powell, Esq.*, where he is delineating the worthy man :

> Calm on the beach, while maddening billows rave,
> He gains philosophy from every wave ;
> Science from every object round me draws,
> From various Nature and from Nature's laws.

The stoic quip turns into a glorification of Newton. And it is significant that in *The Genius of Liberty* he sees Liberty as clad in Science and Science as a matter of "various lights":

> Science in various lights attention won,
> Waved on his robe and glittered in the sun.

Why did this sense of a new world, a new kind of world, first gain its æsthetic expression in Savage? May we not find the explanation in his miserable life with its unending and hopeless effort to claim his "mother" who rejected him—Mrs. Brett (previously Countess of Macclesfield) whom rightly or wrongly he was convinced was his mother. Socially he was the outcast seeking to claim "his own"; intellectually he was a person of no particular education seeking to master the culture of the ruling-class. The baffled generous element in him was what broke through the stereotype which it could only partially and unsatisfactorily grasp and dominate, and in breaking through came upon this new element of confused yet genuinely creative sensibility. He got something of mother-earth that no other of the men of his world got. In the same way we find that landscape-painting came to maturity only when the land had been finally taken away from the people by the enclosures—or rather, during the last stage, when the land was rapidly going and consciousness of the loss was becoming poignant. (There is a touch of allegory in the frantic appetite Turner's father had for a bit of land; his trick of advancing the fence a few inches in the night to grab even the tiniest slice of solid satisfying earth from the denying world.) Savage is then the forerunner of the English romantics in verse

and of the great English landscape painters, because he had that ceaseless consuming ache to regain his lost "mother".

A passage in his poem *Of Public Spirit* reveals excellently the whole web of emotion behind his obsession with the "various" realities of subtle light-play:

> Let families, long strangers to delight,
> Whom wayward Fate dispersed, by me unite;
> Here live enjoying life, see plenty, peace,
> Their lands increasing as their sons increase.
> As Nature yet is found in leafy glades
> To intermix the walks with lights and shades,
> Or as with good and ill, in chequered strife,
> Various the goddess colours human life,
> So in this fertile clime . . .

So in the fertile clime of regained earth. The complex light-play is for him the emblem both of the new scientific consciousness of "various Nature", which will somehow lead on to that union where the dispersed and harried families will enjoy life in plenty and peace; and also of the rich interweaving of human relationship which is somehow making for the same end.

Yes, Richard Savage deserves a glance of recognition. When he lay dying in Newgate on the 31st July, 1743, after all the long-drawn bitterness of poverty and insult, he awoke from his death-daze to see the keeper at his bedside, and "with uncommon earnestness" said, "I have something to say to you, Sir." But after a while, moving his hand "in a melancholy manner", he said, "'Tis gone"; and the keeper went away and Savage died. But what he had wanted to say has not been altogether lost.

THE ENGLISH SONNET

In May, an error crept into a quotation made during a review of a book of poems by Marie C. Stopes. The subsequent apology led to a correspondence in which Dr. Stopes remarked, " I see you rather favour rough verse—and the sonnet is the smoothest and most streamlined of any form. Hence I think moderns would really *like sonnets given the chance ! "*

I do not agree with the view which sees " free " verse as " rough " (" ready ", I always feel, understood). What makes verse rough to me, and to most of my generation, is not the shape, but the convoluting of thought and phrase to fit the outer shape. We have trained ourselves to see the form as the container, and to ask that what it contains—the thought, the feeling, the phrases, too—should have real and flowing shape. Admittedly, there may be only few of the younger who fulfil all or more than one of these expectations at a time. But the same applies to the older, as a glance at many rhyme-schemes and sound-patterns, or absence of scheme and pattern, in the poems of the Oxford Book will show. The fact that these are in that book seems to me to show that most people regard verse as they do children—something to be seen but not heard. As long as a poem looks neat, few mind if it sounds ragged. . . . Therefore, I disagree with Dr. Stopes in advance. But I liked her idea that the sonnet, being " streamlined ", should be the form of forms for our age, and so I fell in with her suggestion to let her " say my say in about four or five of your pages ".

These are the pages. . .

STREAMLINE POETRY

By MARIE CARMICHAEL STOPES

THE "MODERN" OF to-day "streamlines" his (and her) favourite toys. Ships, railway-engines, cars, aeroplanes, furniture, and women are all "streamlined". Countless gripping columns of pictorial advertisement reiterate this, illustrating the details point by point and emphasizing how essentially "streamline-minded" our nation, "civilization" itself, has become.

But poetry has not taken on the modern contours.

Poetry to-day is full of grit in the machinery, externally rough, lacking polish, fashioned with lop-sided irregularities of form which are the very reverse of streamlined. Beauty of surface, swiftness of attainment of the object, smoothness, speed, are conspicuously absent. Is the young man whose heart is deeply stirred by the steady throb of a true-running set of cylinders in the engine of his motor-bike or his aeroplane going to respond to so-called poetry which lacks the music of rhythm?

We know the answer: he does not. Nor does his girl—his mother—his father—his friend. The people as a whole no longer care for new poetry. Booksellers will tell you "it does not sell", and that fact is reflected in the scant courtesy paid to it by the popular papers, wherein, with the rarest exceptions, the appearance of the new volume of verse passes entirely unnoticed.

The point needs no labouring; everyone knows that the poet to-day does not reach the heart of the public. An article in *Isis* so recently as June, 1939, asked "Where are the poets?" saying "One of the great tragedies

of the moment is the lack of poetry and the lack of interest in poetry" : concluding that the country " has lost its taste for poetry " and " the reading public has grown disinterested [*sic*] and apathetic very largely because the poet has grown inconsiderately obscure ".

I must bear the brunt of saying that the poet has done worse than this, he has grown ugly and uncouth. Some measure of obscurity does not matter in poetry which is beautiful, perhaps it even adds the violet haze to the distant mountain-tops ; but beauty there must be or the word poetry is misapplied.

The smoothness of rhythm, the music which is essential to the beauty of poetry were too lazily cultivated by many poets who at times would allow thought, the substance of content, to " fade out " and a mere jingle composed of the necessary rhymes to fill up a line or two or even more. The latecomers found it very difficult to say in the simple rhyme schemes anything true and beautiful which had not already been said before ; they noticed the padding and insincerity of thought often induced by regular rhythm and rhyme, and so they denounced both and set out to write " new poetry ". Incidentally they took the easy low road, and to hide their technical laziness were portentously obscure, or to make talk, essayed esoteric difficulties which ran counter to external form. Hence the poet's severance from reality and the true spirit of his time.

To catch up with the public spirit the poet might try to " streamline " his verse. How ?

There is one form (there may be many more but I am considering in this article just this one) little used but exquisitely modelled, ready to his hand, *if the poet will work*. It is the Sonnet.

" An old form " the young cub may snort—Yes, Sir ! but old, as England is old, the past usage only the embryonic beginnings leading to the present. The present potentialities are almost unprobed. The modern poet professes to wrestle with difficulties—well, the sonnet is a form *so difficult to write* and so easy to read that it offers the maximum spur to the fit mind. Look how the great poets of history have failed in the sonnet. Milton succeeded only with a few. Wordsworth, Keats, Swinburne, with a few each. Rossetti, though he wrote a glowing hundred, made quantities of mistakes in them. Douglas has achieved a couple of dozen of fine ones. Shakespeare alone was their supreme master.

How beautiful Rossetti could be we realize when we remember his lines on Sleep—

" Sleep sank them lower than the tide of dreams,
And their dreams watched them sink, and slid away ;
Slowly their souls swam up again, through gleams
Of watered light and dull drowned waifs of day ;
Till from some wonder of new woods and streams
He woke, and wondered more ; for there she lay."

But in the same volume what failures jar—irregularities that defeat all the rest of the construction. Such awful lines as these—

" On the same day with the first corn-poppy.
Alas for hourly change ! Alas for all
The loves that from his hand proud Youth lets fall,
Even as the beads of a told rosary ! "

Hitherto it is only Shakespeare and Douglas who have really used the sonnet.

Leaving out Shakespeare's, are there two hundred first-rate sonnets in the English language ? I doubt it.

Not more, certainly. There is material in our modern life for the making of two thousand.

Here, then, is the difficult form, up-to-date because it is immortal, exquisite in its beauty when perfect, dormant, waiting for modern treatment.

And how appropriate to our times the sonnet is—brief, swift, taut—streamlined down to the last syllable.

Draw out the design of a sonnet and note how curiously it resembles that of a stream-lined car. 1212 : 3434 : 5656 : 77.[1]

The click at the end, the rounding off, memorably corresponds to the necessary termination to defeat air-lag in your car or aeroplane. The rhymed couplet forms the " neat trailing edge made pointed to prevent the drag of dead air in a trailing vortex ", as the mechanical experts would say of an engined mechanism. The surface polish, the beauty and symmetrical precision of line, the rhythm of the perfect streamlined mechanism are all in the sonnet, and added to that the mysterious thing which makes the work of the true poet out-live all other contrivance in history, that *life* which is the gift of the divine.

This should be the age of the sonnet, the good sonnet. The public are potentially ready. I have heard quite " nice and ordinary " young men spontaneously quote that lovely perfection of Wordsworth's, " Upon Westminster Bridge," beginning :

> Earth has not anything to show more fair :
> Dull would he be of soul who could pass by

[1] I know all about the claim that the Petrarchan sonnet without the concluding couplet is the higher form : I dispute it but in this brief article cannot enter into that discussion.

A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning;

This sonnet remains true, but London herself has changed and grown. In that growth and in man's evolving outlook are new beauties which new poets should immortalize. Why not in sonnet form? Not only is the sonnet our most "streamlined" and condensed poetic medium, it has, one feels deeply, some inherent quality which gives it an organic entity. A lyric may be composed of three or five or any number of verses of any number of lines—a sonnet *is* fourteen lines built on such a vital pattern that it has a specific life of its own.

THE TRADITIONAL SENSE

There follow a selection of sonnets—two by a poet whose first book appeared forty years ago, one by a young poet who published his first this year, and a dexterous example of the duplex form by Dr. Stopes herself.

The rest of the poetry this month is planned to please those who call for "traditional" poetry. I have here no authors I do not ordinarily publish (though Siegfried Sassoon has not contributed since the first number), but I think that by being removed from some of those among whom they usually appear, these will appear more "traditional". The word itself needs definition. I used it, when those who dislike "modern" verse, asked for that with which they were more familiar. In their sense, "traditional" means "of a past tradition". But every poet is adding to or creating a tradition. And in this sense, which might be called the Present Traditional, Dylan Thomas and Philip O'Connor are as traditional as W. H. Davies, or Laurence Binyon; and far more so than, say, Alfred Noyes or Lord Gorell, who, in my opinion, use without adding to a form they wear out and therefore, by bringing into disrepute, give "traditional" a past sense.

Let the poetry be read then, for what it is, and if the word prefaced to it be wrong, let it be regarded as a label, and removed or ignored, as labels are when luggage has reached destination; which in this case, I hope is an unbiased and sensitive reception by readers. That sensitivity, may I add, serving them also in issues to come, when I return to poetry which is concerned more with creating than carrying on a tradition, spare the word?

POETRY

THE PEARL

Sent, after reading her memoirs, to Lady Ottoline Morrell with a pearl still attached to the shell.

I

Of those we tried to know whom have we known?
For like a seed pearl lost upon the beach
Where down through the tinier stones our fingers reach
To grains that, wet, glow like that one, our own . . .
Yet ah! they dry, lose lustre!—so lose tone
Those lucent souls we welcome till from each
We, whom perseverance and patience teach,
Must hide a disillusioned heart and groan.

Yet pain, as in the shell reclosed seed pearl
May gather nacre—build foiled worth twice over;
Even mean returns ennoble the hurt lover;
Round missed and mourned divined and fathomed furl
Till apprehended the apprehender dare
Sublime from loss values that never were.

II

How rarely thus rich memories are shown!
Even leaden griefs from their bruised womb derive,
Godlike, new health till they spring-tinted thrive;
So phantasms to the portraying hand atone,
Though they dissolved, with spore the soul was sown,
Which magic glass where images revive
Could nourish roots in her dun pool alive
Till spirit-lotus on her face had blown.

O Pearl, pangs, griefs re-integrate as tints,
Not here, not there, not weighed, not bored, not threaded,
On matrix mother-of-pearl no longer bedded,
But, rainbow fabric of a myriad hints
Breathed from your book, arched over dead distress,
Vision absorbs experience and can bless !

STURGE MOORE

[AUTHOR'S NOTE.—Once a small pearl from a ring being lost on the beach, I spent the best part of a morning in finding it ; this private event suggested the first image. Other images recall how Chinese divers put seed pearls back into the parent shells that they may grow larger. They even put tiny leaden Buddhas into the shells and, returning a year later withdraw them coated with nacre ; for the mollusc covers every foreign body with layers of the irridescent secretion that keeps the interior of its shell smooth. The tints of mother-of-pearl are due to a damask pattern in this smoothness, a similar though finer surface gives the pearl its lustre, while a partly comparable arrangement of particles in mist creates the rainbow. There is no pigment present in any of these effects.

The contemplative soul often discovers that the images it formed of those whom it wooed were worthier than the leaden originals. Such phantasms remain valuable after they have been discovered illusory. They sow the soul with an impalpable spore which at length blooms like a lotus on the face.

Such are the images glanced over in these two sonnets.]

SONNET

IT IS EASY in sunlight to believe beauty
Is the calm and justified end.
When the arm moves along the sun's dazzle
The sun is the wonder we attend.
As children we played with knights in armour
And saw the car turning at the dream's bend,
But the car and the dream and the knights in armour
Have turned out a wonder we did not intend.

And the wonder sun with its dear dazzle
Plays equally perhaps a deadly game
That fades the living hand to stubble
Whose beauty was real and not a name.
The face that turns to the sun says trouble
And the blush on the face says shame.

JULIAN SYMONS

BREVITIES

I AM THAT man who with a luminous look
Sits up at night to write a ruminant book.

I am that man who with a furrowing frown
Thinks harshly of the world—and corks it down.

I am that man who loves to ride alone
When landscapes wear his mind's autumnal tone.

I am that man who, having lived his day,
Looks once on life and goes his wordless way.

SIEGFRIED SASSOON

IMMORTAL CORE

"September Crisis," 1938

While London seethed like swarming hive of bees
Shrill gas mask suppliants on the highway surged,
Shivering women flocked upon their knees,
Men, tearing turf for trenches, shovels urged,
With inner fire eyes blazed and lips snapped white,
The fate of all the world on knife-edge hung
Impaled on England's history that night.
I vision-led serenely walked among
Them all, and knew my prayer had not to cease
For on my will the great world's fate still turned.
You came, I sought to give you pictured peace
That words might lighten your sad smile that burned
The world to melting, palpitating youth.
I searched my heart for words to chisel truth
Probing your eyes for guides I whispered
"I cannot tell what words I ought to say"—
You—eyes on eyes, by other channels led
Replied "You have no need to speak to-day,"
Rose, swift embracing, closed me in your arms
Your heart on mine pulsed with your clinging kisses
Till breath choked breath, throttling false alarms,
Whirling us up a thousand human blisses.
You—on the knife edge—the Immortal Core,
Symbolic Youth, with tender eyes and hands
Whose lips diverted words. No effort more
I made to warn you not to fear war's bands.
"Time will reveal you go to peace not war"
Secure, I kissed as I had never kissed in life before.

MARIE C. STOPES

IN TIME OF SUSPENSE

Draw-to the curtains then, and let it rain.
We'll look no more on that disordered scene:
Blind rage upon a blinded window-pane,
The shivering white upon the darkening green;
Nor that beyond it, leaping to and fro,
Ghost in the ruined garden, or mad briar?
Shut out confusion, draw the curtains to,
Build the cathedrals of the fire anew.
Close, eyes, on doubt, and open on desire.

Here in the quiet brilliance of belief
We fashion life at such intensity,
The very chairs might rustle into leaf
And panels grope to build their primal tree.
Now when our bodies meet like star and star,
Now when our minds remoter commerce do,
No wish too subtle and no world too far,
But we, so perfectly in tune we are,
Passionately conceive and make it true.

And so farewell to Winter; for I hear
The lambs rejoicing on a hill of jade,
The blackbird in his vocal graph of fear
Scattering darkness down the painted glade.
It crowds the curtains, mad in bud and wing,
That world of passion that your fancy craves,
That England that the fancy, quickening,
Cannot but call the very eye of Spring,
Lashed by the curled abandon of her waves!

Folly of dreaming, when you have entwined
Mild arms about the dreamer and the dream !
Drawn by those gentle Avons I shall find
A land where April does not merely seem.
Narrow horizons ! Yet how wide to me
For whom they compass all those island charms
That I must die to safeguard, it may be :
An England the aspiring candles see,
Narrow enough to compass in my arms.

So in this room. But when I stood alone
One evening on a windy crown of land,
Beneath the emblem of a youthful moon,
And watched oblivion like a tired hand
Folding the map of Spring away, I knew
Hill upon hill receding were no more
Than picture and faint effigy of you,
Nor shall I ever after lose that view
Though I descend into the night of war.

For us, no heartening slogan will assuage
What must be suffered in the mad descent.
We dreamed that war was but an awkward age
And country could be lost in continent.
The cretin world remains where it began,
Clings to the shambles and improvement shelves.
Too undeceived for patriotic man
Youth takes up arms to rescue what it can ;
For all is lost, but what we have ourselves.

When war came to our cradles once, it meant
Only the mutter of a thunder-clap
Somewhere beyond the tidy hills of Kent,
A black line every morning on a map,

Germans in the allotment, trains unlit—
Did we not learn of war in gentle doses?
We merely breathed it like a dangerous grit
In every breath we drew, contracted it
From our warm bottles like tuberculosis.

Formed by the years of agony, wherein
Fear stole into the heart and set up house,
Formed to be nervous as a violin,
We find no brothers in the dead. For us
No voice will speak in the white cemeteries
Of France. We are not of that careless kind
To whom life seemed to offer prize on prize,
Who, at the terminus, with laughing eyes
Saw only joy in battle. Blind, stark blind.

Nor are we of the next unhappy age
That laughed, but all its laughter was an urn
Raised to Belief, the murdered heritage.
Now from those ageing pantaloons we learn
The young are very serious. Even so.
As passionately serious as the Spring
After the sterile gaieties of snow.
Give us but time enough, and we will show
These barren valleys how to laugh and sing!

Give us but time, we say. For now, on all,
The radiant anguish of a dream is thrown.
Vivid the bird beyond the orchard wall
Who fills Goodnight with poignancy unknown.
More beautiful because it is more haunted
Our world revolves. Accusing as a text,
These walls, these shapes of love we have been granted,
Are critically watching though enchanted:
"This Winter, yes," they nod at us. "But next?"

Thus for the island genius, Liberty,
Beloved by Roman letters upon stone,
Another generation learns to die
Gravely, not caring if the flags are flown,
Believing simply it must save for Earth
A way of life becoming to mankind,
A grace of centuries, a thing of worth:
This we believe, who by a peaceful hearth
Have laughing eyes to-night, but are not blind.

Then let the violin on its own nerves
Be racked, if only the sweet Master seek
The harmony its brittle heart conserves.
What if, while you and I contrive to speak
With exiled April in a distant room,
The clouds should lift, and a young moon outside
Swim like an amulet beyond the gloom?
Shall we not look upon this night to come?
Blow out the candles—throw the curtains wide!

LAURENCE WHISTLER

ONE FEBRUARY EVENING

Now in these mountain grasses beneath a winter sky
I watch the valleys lighted, I hear the curlew cry,
I hear the sorrowful echoes borne from the Severn Sea,
And the dirge of desolation, the sigh of history.

O mountain grasses ignorant of man and all his pain,
Sing in this freezing twilight, murmur to me again
Of the prehistoric æons, the landscapes pure and bare,
The centuries of silence, the unpolluted air.

O northern winds, my lovers, roar around me where I stand,
A naked creature lonely in a brown and barren land,
And scatter from my memory the weeds of human lore
And make me as cold, as careless, as a wave on a desolate shore.

IDRIS DAVIES

BALLAD OF THE ROUGH SEA

I LIKE THE smell of the wind, the sniff,
Said a man on the top of Dover cliff.
I like the voice of the sea, the sound,
Said the fossil-man asleep in the ground.
And I want to look over the sea,
Said the man on the cliff-top free.
I want to look over the sea,
I will look over the sea.

The sun fell slant on the cliff's white face
And the waters ran under the sails in a race
But the fossil-man in his bed of chalk
Turned in his grave and began to talk :
O what's the good of a man in a rock
Who will not wake when the seawaves knock ?
I want to stand up in the rock.
I will stand up in the rock.

O the seagulls are crying, the seagulls scream
That the sea is cruel and blue and green
But to-day the waters are white with spray
And hark in the boats what the fishermen say :

" It's a rough grey day with the tide coming in
And a haul of herring's a slippery skin
For the waters are deep and the nets are thin.
It's a rough grey day with the tide coming in."

The fishers were fishing from little boats
From Cap Grisnez to John o' Groats
When the man in the rock and the man on the cliff
Met, like a shadow sheer and stiff.
They were shooting their hooks from the side
And the wind coming in with the tide.
They were leaning and looking over the side.
They were shooting their hooks from the side.

A skeleton mad in the seawave's roar
Screams, and a man has come through the door
Of the chalkwhite cliff, and star and sea
Are locked in the fear of a fisherman's knee.
But louder and louder the white waves hiss—
They will never come out of this.
Till the stars fall and the stone mouths kiss
They will never come out of this.

Come up from the sea, you sandy shoals
That lurk where Leviathan swims and rolls !
Like the pointed limpets stung by foam
Bared by the black wave leaping home
Come up from the sea, you crags,
Where the soaked straw-pillow sags,
Come up for the wreck's black-timbered rags,
Come up from the sea, you crags.

" O wandering water white and free
As the runaway stag that hides in the tree,
As the runaway stag that flies from the horn,
Fly to the low roof where we were born
And pull the door from the hinge and throw
The seven wild windows all in a row
And the tables and chairs in the room below
Through the white sea-jaws throw !

" There are loaves of bread in the wooden chest
And safe on the hooks the white cups rest
And high on the shelf are sugar and tea
But cold is the darkness under the sea.
There's a floor unsafe beneath
And the sea has a wolf's white teeth.
O sweet would it be to beg and breathe.
There's a floor unsafe beneath.

" O gallows-man on the cliff-top free,
Why do you fix your eyes on the sea ?
O man in the rock erect and stiff,
Why are you pale as the dead white cliff ?
O is it your thought and is it your wish
To help us to catch a creel of fish ?
The waters to-night are devilish.
O tell us your thought and your wish."

I have left in a room my rope and pin.
I will open your eyes when the sea rolls in.
I have left in a cave my bony skull.
I am waiting to hear the cry of a gull
For a seagull is crying aloud
That the sea is white as a shroud,
That, whiter than whitest moon or cloud,
The sea is white as a shroud.

" Go back to your rock, go back to your room,
We are men of heart, not men of the tomb.
Not the sea's twist nor the wind's alarms
Shall pull us down from the New Moon's arms,
And our ships are good black teak.
Go back, for we must not speak.
Go back to the crevice, back to the creek.
Go back, for we must not speak."

VERNON WATKINS

HIGHLANDS

An hour of water to the model village
hot and cool prude among her shaly hills
scattering her scarlet homesteads down the valley
fields in full fling before the autumn gales

Impatient heather and fern crowd the horizon
reflecting in the sky their outlandish tartan;
the weekday village is houses but no men
the authentic church is locked, its idle steeple

is now but a landmark for the lonely homeless
tramp as he turns the last bend of Ben Lomond
to find but a Tudor pub and post-office open
and not one passenger in the waiting bus

And is it for this that we have come so far
is this the " immortal-beauty-spot " of the guides
this sullen burrow of a skinflint people?
Is this the end of a journey, our Hesperides?

I recall it is more than a lifetime or less than a minute
the final journey to the end of time
and that I must travel alone the whole sad route
an Alpine climber lost without a line

and terrible that fall into eternity
—which plots me the scale of these too advertised hills—
with, at the end, no church or pub to meet me
nor sound, not even a riddle of bells and rills

not the far cry of the owl or the beat of a heart.
A dog sleeps here by the bridge: the pub is closing:
I wait for the bus or the boat or the moon to start:
such days are memorable for a view of nothing.

FRANCIS SCARFE

HIS AUNT

YES MY DARLING aunt
the boy laughed hollowly.
Squinting at the blue lights freed
through the lily-fine window, bordered
like him by bars of a straight asparagus traditionalism
and even perhaps remembering the wire-flower
of my aunt's hand
subtly cleaning with moral lechery.

Yes my darling aunt whose
laughs are forever expressed in the glassy chandelier's
tumble
and whose principles could beam the ceiling well
and whose ignorance walls us in

papered with the playful nosegays
of our *strange* education. (My aunt
is laughing like bits of paper
on a real swanky toboggan !
Her rippling foolery
is shooting her to war ! She's
crashing through
into the bulging chill water !)
She's smacking down into the madness she's skated on,
breeding rockdrilling militant beliefs
and plans of disastrous action.

She's netting in the young blond nephew—
he's stuck to the tea-cup, he's grasped
by the hand of her chair
and the room is a load with the maddening
fiery
torrential eyes of AUNT EMILY, great dragon
of Donne Street armed to the sizzling hair
and MAKING FOR HIM !

PHILIP O'CONNOR

EXTRAORDINARY LITTLE COUGH

By DYLAN THOMAS

ONE AFTERNOON, IN a particularly bright and glowing August, some years before I knew I was happy, George Hooping, whom we called little Cough, Sidney Evans, Dan Davies and I sat on the roof of a lorry travelling to the end of the Peninsula. It was a tall six-wheeled lorry from which we could spit on the roofs of the passing cars and throw our applestumps at women on the pavement. One stump caught a man on a bicycle in the middle of the back, he swerved across the road, for a moment we sat quiet and George Hooping's face grew pale. And if the lorry runs over him, I thought calmly as the man on the bicycle swayed towards the hedge, he'll get killed and I'll be sick on my trousers and perhaps on Sidney's too and we'll all be arrested and hanged except George Hooping who didn't have an apple. But the lorry swept past ; behind us the bicycle drove into the hedge, the man stood up and waved his fist and I waved my cap back at him.

" You shouldn't have waved your cap," said Sidney Evans, " he'll know what school we're in." He was clever, dark, and careful, and had a purse and a wallet. " We're not in school now." " Nobody can expel me," said Dan Davies. He was leaving next term to serve in his father's fruit shop for a salary. We all wore haversacks, except George Hooping whose mother had given him a brown paper parcel that kept coming undone, and carried a suitcase each. I had placed a coat over my suitcase because the initials on it were N. T., and everybody would know that it belonged to my sister. Inside the lorry were

two tents, a box of food, a packing-case of kettles and saucepans and knives and forks, an oil lamp, a primus stove, groundsheets and blankets, a gramophone with three records, and a tablecloth from George Hooping's mother.

We were going to camp for a fortnight in Rhossilli, in a field above the sweeping five-mile beach. Sidney and Dan had stayed there last year, coming back brown and swearing, full of stories of campers' dances round the fires at midnight, and elderly girls from the Training College who sunbathed naked on ledges of rocks surrounded by laughing boys, and singing in bed that lasted until dawn. But George had never left home for more than a night; and then, he told me one half-holiday when it was raining and there was nothing to do but to stay in the wash-house racing his guinea-pigs giddily along the benches, it was only to stay in St. Thomas, three miles from his house, with an aunt who could see through the walls and who knew what a Mrs. Hoskin was doing in the kitchen.

"How much further?" asked George Hooping, clinging to his split parcel, trying in secret to push back socks and suspenders, enviously watching the solid green fields skim by as though the roof were a raft on an ocean with a motor in it. Anything upset his stomach, even liquorice and sherbert, but I alone knew that he wore long combinations in the summer with his name stitched in red on them.

"Miles and miles," Dan said. "Thousands of miles," I said, "it's Rhossilli, U.S.A. We're going to camp on a bit of rock that wobbles in the wind." "And we have to tie the rock on to a tree." "Cough can use his suspenders," Sidney said. The lorry roared

round a corner—" Upsydaisy. Did you feel it then, Cough? It was on one wheel "—and below us, beyond fields and farms, the sea, with a steamer puffing on its far edge, shimmered. " Do you see the sea down there, it's shimmering, Dan," I said. George Hooping pretended to forget the lurch of the slippery roof and, from that height, the frightening smallness of the sea. Gripping the rail of the roof, he said, " My father saw a killer-whale." The conviction in his voice died quickly as he began. He beat against the wind with his cracked, treble voice, trying to make us believe. I knew he wanted to find a boast so big it would make our hair stand up and stop the wild lorry. " Your father's a herbalist." But the smoke on the horizon was the white, curling fountain the whale blew through its nose, and its black nose was the bow of the poking ship. " Where did he keep it, Cough, in the wash-house? " " He saw it in Madagascar. It had tusks as long as from here to, from here to . . ." " From here to Madagascar." All at once the threat of a steep hill disturbed him. No longer bothered about the adventures of his father, a small, dusty, skull-capped and alpaca-coated man standing and mumbling all day in a shop full of herbs and curtained holes in the wall where old men with backache and young girls in trouble waited for consultations in the half-dark, he stared at the hill swooping up and clung to Dan and me. " She's doing fifty." " The brakes have gone, Cough." He twisted away from us, caught hard with both hands on the rail, pulled and trembled, pressed on a case behind him with his foot, and steered the lorry to safety round a stone-walled corner and up a gentler hill to the gate of a battered farm house.

Leading down from the gate there was a lane to the first

beach. It was high tide, and we heard the sea dashing. Four boys on a roof, one tall, dark, regular-featured, precise of speech, in a good suit, a boy of the world, one squat, ungainly, red-haired, his red wrists fighting out of short, frayed sleeves, one heavily spectacled, small-paunched, with indoor shoulders and feet in always unlaced boots wanting to go different ways, one small, thin, indecisively active, quick to get dirty, curly, saw their field in front of them, a fortnight's new home that had thick, pricking hedges for walls, the sea for a front garden, a green gutter for a lavatory, and a wind-struck tree in the very middle.

I helped Dan unload the lorry while Sidney tipped the driver and George struggled with the farmyard gate and looked at the ducks inside. The lorry drove away. "Let's build our tents by the tree in the middle," said George. "Pitch," Sidney said, unlatching the gate for him. We pitched our tents in a corner out of the wind. "One of us must light the primus," Sidney said, and after George had burned his hand we sat in a circle outside the sleeping tent talking about motor cars, content to be in the country, lazily easy in each other's company, thinking to ourselves as we talked, knowing always that the sea dashed on the rocks not far below us and rolled out into the world, that to-morrow we would bathe and throw a ball on the sands and stone a bottle on a rock and perhaps meet three girls. The oldest would be for Sidney, the plainest for Dan, and the youngest for me. George broke his spectacles when he spoke to girls; he had to walk off blind as a bat, and the next morning he would say: "I'm sorry I had to leave you but I remembered a message." It was past five o'clock. My father and mother would have

finished tea ; the plates with famous castles on them were cleared from the table ; father with a newspaper, mother with socks, were far away in the blue haze to the left, up a hill, in a villa, hearing from the park the faint cries of children drift over the public tennis-court, and wondering where I was and what I was doing. I was alone with my friends in a field, with a blade of grass in my mouth, saying, " Dempsey would hit him cold," and thinking of the great whale that George's father never saw thrashing on the top of the sea or plunging underneath like a mountain. " Bet you I can beat you to the end of the field." Dan and I raced among the cowpads, George thumping at our heels. " Let's go down to the beach." Sidney led the way, running straight as a soldier in his khaki shorts, over a stile, down fields to another, into a wooded valley, up through heather on to a clearing near the edge of the cliff where two broad boys were wrestling outside a tent. I saw one bite the other in the leg, they both struck expertly and savagely at the face, one struggled clear, and, with a leap, the other had him face to the ground. They were Brazell and Skully. " Hullo Brazell and Skully," said Dan. Skully had Brazell's arm in a policeman's grip ; he gave it two quick twists and stood up smiling. " Hullo boys. Hullo little Cough, how's your father ? " " He's very well, thank you." Brazell on the grass felt for broken bones. " Hullo boys, how are your fathers ? " They were the worst and biggest boys in school. Every day for a term they caught me before class began and wedged me in the wastepaper basket and then put the basket on the master's desk. Sometimes I could get out and sometimes not. Brazell was lean, Skully was fat. " We're camping in Button's field," said Sidney. " We're taking

a rest cure here," said Brazell, " and how is little Cough these days ? Father given him a pill ? " We wanted to run down to the beach, Dan and Sidney and George and I, to be alone together, to walk and shout by the sea in the country, throw stones at the waves, remember adventures and make more to remember. " We'll come down the beach with you," said Skully. He linked arms with Brazell and they strolled behind us, imitating George's wayward walk and slashing the grass with switches. Dan said hopefully, " Are you camping here for long, Brazell and Skully ? " " For a whole nice fortnight, Davies and Thomas and Evans and Hooping."

When we reached Mewslade beach and flung ourselves down, as I scooped up sand and let it trickle grain by grain through my fingers, as George peered at the sea through his double lenses and Sidney and Dan heaped sand over his legs, Brazell and Skully sat behind us like two warders. " We thought of going to Nice for a fortnight," said Brazell—he rhymed it with ice, dug Skully in the ribs—" But the air's nicer here for the complexion." " It's as good as a herb," said Skully. They shared an enormous joke, cuffing and biting and wrestling again, scattering sand in the eyes, until they fell back with laughter and Brazell wiped the blood from his nose with a piece of picnic paper. George lay covered to the waist in sand. I watched the sea slipping out with birds quarrelling over it, and the sun beginning to go down patiently. " Look at little Cough," said Brazell, " isn't he extraordinary ? He's growing out of the sand. Little Cough hasn't got any legs." " Poor little Cough," said Skully, " he's the most extraordinary boy in the world." " Extraordinary little

Cough," they said together, "extraordinary, extraordinary, extraordinary." They made a song out of it, and both conducted with their switches. "He can't swim," "He can't run," "He can't learn," "He can't bowl," "He can't bat," "And I bet he can't make water." George kicked the sand from his legs. "Yes I can." "Can you swim?" "Can you run?" "Can you bowl?" "Leave him alone," Dan said. They shuffled nearer to us. The sea was racing out now. Brazell said in a serious voice, wagging his finger, "Now quite truthfully, Cough, aren't you extraordinary? Very extraordinary? Say yes or no." "Categorically yes or no," said Skully. "No," George said, "I can swim and I can run and I can play cricket. I'm not frightened of anybody." I said, "He was second in the form last term." "Now isn't that extraordinary? If he can be second he can be first. But no, that's too ordinary. Little Cough must be second." "The question is answered," said Skully, "little Cough is extraordinary." They began to sing again. "He's a very good runner," Dan said. "Well, let him prove it. Skully and I ran the whole length of Rhossilli sands this morning, didn't we Skull?" "Every inch." "Can little Cough do it?" "Yes," said George. "Do it then." "I don't want to." "Extraordinary little Cough can't run," they sang, "can't run, can't run."

Three girls, all fair, came down the cliff side arm in arm, dressed in short white trousers. Their arms and legs and throats were brown as berries; I could see when they laughed that their teeth were very white; they stepped on to the beach, and Brazell and Skully stopped singing. Sidney smoothed his hair back, rose casually, put his hands in his pockets, and walked towards the girls who now

stood close together, gold and brown, admiring the sunset with little attention, patting their scarves, turning smiles on each other. He stood in front of them, grinned, and saluted: "Hullo Gwyneth, do you remember me?" "La di da," whispered Dan at my side and made a mock salute to George still peering at the retreating sea. "Well if this isn't a surprise," said the tallest girl. With little studied movements of her hands, as though she were distributing flowers, she introduced Peggy and Jean. Fat Peggy, I thought, too jolly for me, with hockey legs and tomboy crop, was the girl for Dan; Sidney's Gwyneth was a distinguished piece and quite sixteen, as immaculate and unapproachable as a girl in Ben Evan's stores; but Jean, shy and curly, with butter-coloured hair, was mine. Dan and I walked slowly to the girls. I made up two remarks: "Fair's fair, Sidney, no bigamy aboard," and "Sorry we couldn't arrange to have the sea in when you came." Jean smiled, wriggling her heel in the sand, and I raised my cap. "Hullo." The cap dropped at her feet. As I bent down, three lumps of sugar fell from my blazer pocket. "I've been feeding a horse," I said, and began to blush guiltily when all the girls laughed. I could have swept the ground with my cap, kissed my hand gaily, called them señoritas and made them smile without tolerance. Or I could have stayed at a distance, and this would have been better still, my hair blown in the wind, though there was no wind at all that evening, wrapped in mystery and staring at the sun, too aloof to speak to girls; but I knew that all the time my ears would have been burning, my stomach would have been as hollow and as full of voices as a shell; "speak to them quickly before they go away," a voice would have said insistently over the

dramatic silence as I stood like Valentino on the edge of the bright, invisible bull-ring of the sands. "Isn't it lovely here?" I said. I spoke to Jean alone; and "this is love", I thought, as she nodded her head and swung her curls and said, "It's nicer than Porthcawl." Brazell and Skully were two big bullies in a nightmare; I forgot them when Jean and I walked up the cliff; and, looking back to see if they were baiting George again or wrestling together, I saw that George had disappeared around the corner of the rocks and that they were talking at the foot of the cliff with Sidney and the two girls.

"What's your name?" I told her. "That's Welsh," she said. "You've got a beautiful name." "Oh, it's just ordinary." "Shall I see you again?" "If you want to." "I want to all right. We can go and bathe in the morning. And we can try to get an eagle's egg, did you know that there were eagles here?" "No," she said, "who was that handsome boy on the beach, the tall one with dirty trousers?" "He's not handsome, that's Brazell. He never washes or combs his hair or anything. And he's a bully and he cheats." "I think he's handsome." We walked into Button's field and I showed her inside the tents and gave her one of George's apples. "I'd like a cigarette," she said. It was nearly dark when the others came. Brazell and Skully were with Gwyneth, one each side of her holding her arms, Sidney was with Peggy, and Dan walked whistling behind with his hands in his pockets. "There's a pair," said Brazell, "they've been here all alone and they aren't even holding hands. You want a pill," he said to me. "Build Britain's babies," said Skully. "Go on," Gwyneth said; she pushed him

away from her but she was laughing, and she said nothing when he put his arm around her waist. " What about a bit of fire?" said Brazell. Jean clapped her hands like an actress. Although I knew I loved her, I didn't like anything she said or did. " Who's going to make it?" " He's the best, I'm sure," she said, pointing to me.

Dan and I collected sticks, and by the time it was quite dark there was a fire crackling. Inside the sleeping tent Brazell and Jean sat close together, her golden head was on his shoulder; Skully near them whispered to Gwyneth; Sidney unhappily held Peggy's hand. " Did you ever see such a sloppy lot?" I said, watching Jean smile in the fiery dark. " Kiss me Charley," said Dan. We sat by the fire in the corner of the field. The sea far out was still making a noise. We heard a few nightbirds—" Tu wit tu woo. Listen. I don't like owls," Dan said, " they scratch your eyes out"—and tried not to listen to the soft voices in the tent. Gwyneth's laughter floated over the suddenly moonlit field, but Jean with the beast was smiling and silent in the covered warmth; I knew her little hand was in Brazell's hand. " Women," I said. Dan spat in the fire. We were old and alone, sitting beyond desire in the middle of the night, when George appeared like a ghost in the firelight and stood there trembling until I said: " Where've you been? You've been gone hours. Why are you trembling like that?" Brazell and Skully poked their heads out. " Hullo Cough my boy, how's your father? What have you been up to to-night?" George Hooping could hardly stand. I put my hand on his shoulder to steady him, but he pushed it away. " I've been running on Rhossilli sands.

I ran every bit of it. You said I couldn't and I did. I've been running and running."

Someone inside the tent put a record on the gramophone. It was a selection from "No No Nanette". "You've been running all the time in the dark, little Cough?" "And I bet I ran it quicker than you did, too," George said. "I bet you did," said Brazell. "Do you think we'd run five miles?" said Skully. Now the tune was "Tea for Two". "Did you ever hear anything so extraordinary? I told you Cough was extraordinary. Little Cough's been running all night." "Extraordinary, extraordinary, extraordinary little Cough," they said. Laughing from the shelter of the tent into the darkness they looked like a boy with two heads. And when I stared round at George again he was lying on his back fast asleep in the deep grass and his hair was touching the flames.

AN OLD BRISTOL THEATRE

THE PUZZLE OF THE SLOAT

By RICHARD SOUTHERN

"When for some reason it is impossible to lower a cloth through a cut, it is usual to employ *sloat boxes*. These are troughs into which the cloths can be wound on a roller or tucked down in a series of folds. They are not often met with, but are useful to know about for special effects. An instance would occur if one were called upon to stage a scene in the cage of a coal-mine. The cage would remain stationary while, at the back, a cloth would be wound up or down to give an impression of the various strata passing by. The name sloat boxes is also used for wooden curtain-runners."

(Peter Bax, *Stage Management*, 1936.)

IN THE ENGLISH theatre the *sloat* played a tiny but unmistakable part, and the Theatre Royal, Bristol, still bears evidence of a story almost forgotten save for a stray reference such as the above.

Under the stage of the Theatre Royal, Bristol, is an arrangement of what are pretty certainly among the oldest theatrical timbers in Britain. The Bristol Theatre Royal was built in 1764. There are records of several subsequent alterations but none of them seems to have been so extensive as to have involved wholesale reconstruction. And we may well be right in supposing that part at least of the structure is as it was made by a certain Mr. Saunders, carpenter of old Drury Lane, upon the plans of which house those of the Bristol theatre were based one hundred and seventy-five years ago.

The traps in the stage floor are now out of commission, though with careful study and the reeving of new ropes through the old blocks they could well be made to work again. Until such a happy day dawns when we could refit the old machines, those traps are closed, after the manner of many old traps, by a diagonal timber jammed against the underside of the trapdoor and wedged at the bottom against the framework of the under-stage. A clue lies here to the puzzle of the meaning of the sloat.

Any stout timber of a suitable length will do, but at the present day (May, 1939), one of these traps at Bristol happens to be held up by a prop of a somewhat singular form that may have a considerable bearing on our question. This prop is extemporized from a batten of wood about four inches wide by three inches thick: it is not a plain oblong in section, but is grooved all down along the two corners of one of the wide sides so that it is, in section, like a squat, short-stemmed T. Down the centre of that side of the prop corresponding to the top of the T runs a shallow smooth regular groove, about three-quarters of an inch wide, and semicircular in section. The prop bears a few nail holes on that face corresponding to the bottom of the foot of the T. Otherwise the only other notable feature is the unusual finish of the general surface; it is clearly not painted, yet it is black and it is smooth. Now, no piece of timber in a theatre's construction becomes black and smooth in the course of ordinary work; this surface is the result of special treatment.

Beyond the fact that the piece was not originally intended for a prop, there is little indication in itself of its purpose. What was it made for and where does it belong?

When we turn our back upon it and begin to examine the still-standing relics of machinery among the forest of stays beneath the stage floor, we encounter another part of the story.

Just under each of the narrow cuts in the stage floor there stand at the Bristol Theatre Royal certain tall vertical beams reaching up to the underside of the stage, with empty pulleys in their heads. They might appear at first to be connected in use with the platforms that rose in the wider cuts, and to have those pulleys at their heads in order to bear counterweights assisting the movement of these platforms.

But they possess a certain feature that indicates another use. Each of them is deeply grooved on the face, from base to summit, by a vertical rectangular channel, some three inches deep. An examination of this channel shows that it is wider within than at the surface, and that its walls, after proceeding inward parallel for a little over an inch, suddenly turn outwards at right angles, and then return again parallel to their first course to meet the wide bed of the groove.

At once the conformation of this guarded channel brings a suggestion to the mind, and we have only to make two further observations to feel ready to offer a pretty sound guess at their use. The two observations are these: the walls of this T-shaped channel possess exactly the same black, smooth finish as had the sides of the T-shaped prop. And secondly, in the bed of the channel, there is hollowed an exactly similar, semi-circular-sectioned groove to that on the back of the prop. This time, however, the groove ascends to the throat of the old pulley-sheave above. And now we are ready to put our pieces together. Go on the stage,

open the cut, take the extemporized prop that was described above and slip the end of the prop in the channel of the beam, and you have a member sliding in the throat of another with a pulley on the top of the second to take a rope, and a pair of corresponding grooves in the two to allow that rope to pass from the pulley down between the two (in the bed of the channel) and to be attached at the base of the inner member. Go under the stage to the other end of the line over the pulley, pull it and you raise the centre piece in its slot. These two parts, then, really belong together. What was their use in their hey-day? And what is the clue they offer to the origin of the term "sloat box"?

Station two of these engines toward either end of the cut, fix a groundrow or other such piece of scenery on to the face of the moving parts, and pull the lines simultaneously by means of a machine. Your groundrow will rise through the cut and appear on the stage.

We have now but to take the final step. We can connect the machine above described with a certain chance remark made to me by a Drury Lane stage-hand that a sloat was a vertical groove by means of which scenery was moved up and down. But if we are right, then we have solved the meaning of a sloat—it is simply a slot, of a certain specialized construction—and a sloat box was once the box at the foot of the slots to take the base of a high descending piece of unframed scenery as it sank.

Such a sloat would have an interesting suggestion for our study of the eighteenth-century theatre.

The depth under the stage at the Opéra in Paris is about fifty-one feet at the deepest part. The depth under the Bristol Theatre Royal stage is a little over six

feet at the sides, with a central well of not quite so much again. As a general rule the English stage cellar was much smaller than the Continental. How did the English raise equally large and effective pieces of scenery from their cellars to vie with the trick-change scenes abroad?

There are several people who would point out that we have indirect indication that much deeper cellars were present under certain at least of the English stages. Their method of approach is that if they can establish, as may be done, that in a certain show a piece of scenery of a specific height rose majestically through the stage floor in a scene-change, it then follows that the depth under the stage must have been equal at least to the height of the piece of scenery raised out of it. This appears to be an impeccable conclusion, but as soon as we understand the principle of the sloat box we see that their argument means nothing at all. With the help of a sloat box, a forest of trees, twenty feet high, could rise through the floor of a stage with no more than six feet of basement. The method is simple: only the top four or five feet of the forest is framed out solidly, the rest is painted on a cloth depending from the solid crown-piece and kept, when out of use, rolled up in a box at the foot of the sloats.

But the discerning reader may have noticed what appears to be a fatal oversight in the above description of the rising scene. To do as we suggest would surely necessitate the tongue's over-running the sloats. To speak in a figure, we have pushed the tray out of the match-box and, unsupported, it must fall; we cannot prolong its extrusion indefinitely.

And yet (unless Mr. Bax is wrongly informed) we are faced with what seems to be an incontrovertible

fact, that a box from which a cloth unrolled was on occasion used in conjunction with a sloat. We have not complete certainty that we are right, merely on the casual description of the Drury Lane stage-hand, in applying the name ' sloat ' to the slots which are a feature of the old Theatre Royal stage. We can only say that no piece of evidence has ever been found to suggest that they were not sloats, nor that there ever existed anything separate from them to which the name could be applied.

We then turn to the problem again : boxes could be used with sloats ; they contained the rolled bases of cloths ; and by their help a piece of scenery higher than the stage basement could be brought up on the stage. We have only to settle one point : how could the progress of this rising cloth have been continued after the tongues had reached the limit of the extension in the sloats ? For the limits of that extension *are* fixed by the depth of the understage space.

It must be held in mind that changes of scenery involving the use of sloats would have been, according to the old custom of all scene changes, *visible* changes, that is they were hidden by no curtain as are ours to-day, but were in the nature of *transformation scenes*, contributing a considerable factor to the theatricality of the spectacle.

With this point we turn to our evidence. It exists in *Bühnentechnik der Gegenwart* by Fr. Kranich (1929). The opening of the chapter on vertically-moving systems of scene change consists of the following curious passage :

The " Gitter ".

" The *gitter* (meaning approximately a grating or lattice frame) is a bearer ' batten ' made, cross-braced, out of wood or metal

L-strips, that hangs (across the stage) by two wire ropes one from either end, and can be dropped down through a cut in the stage directly below. To its front is fixed the top of a cloth and at its upper edge is bolted a long, low groundrow, to disguise the straight line of the top. This arrangement, which is generally used for transformation scenes, is to-day superseded . . . "

" *Gitter* are necessary for use with *Kassetten.*" (i.e. with the French *cassette* and English *sloat.*)

Add to the above description the English sloat box and we can at last visualize the whole procedure :

We have a groundrow, perhaps representing bushes, and stiffened behind by one of the above trellises, hung on hooks to the moving tongues of the sloats, and having, fixed to its base, the top edge of a rolled-up cloth. At a signal the cut is opened, the sloat actuated, and the groundrow lifted to the stage. There it stays during the scene. But while it is there, stage hands engage at either end a line from the flies above (which lines are concealed by the adjacent wings). Now, at the transformation, the groundrow is lifted by these lines clear of the hooks on the sloat-tongues, and rises up into the borders unrolling the cloth as it goes till the latter occupies the whole of the stage. Similarly it could be sunk, rolled up, the groundrow dropped on the hooks, the lines cast off, the sloats drawn in, and finally the cut closed.

And the marvel is accomplished.

This then may well have been the English sloat box. And the " sloat box " (so called) of the curtain runners at the end of Peter Bax's note is merely the name given by analogy of form to that kind of curtain track shaped exactly like a sloat, but hung horizontally, slot down, and furnished within with a set of bobbins or fibre balls

running in the wide channel with wire loops projecting through the narrow surface-slot to hold the curtain hooks—taking the " tongue " away, it was the " throat " alone of the sloat.

And such a " throat " is to-day made smooth with graphite, just as were the old prop and sloat in Bristol's Theatre Royal, that still show traces—mute witness and clue to their old story—of their original, smooth, black lead, whose purpose, to reduce friction and give an even motion to rising visions, is emptily outlived.

"MONTAGE IN 1938" [1]

By S. M. EISENSTEIN

(Continued)

(*Translated by* STEPHEN GARRY; *technical check by* IVOR MONTAGU)

III

(*Eisenstein finds montage in the method whereby an actor enacts a given scene.*—I.M.)

THE COMPARISON WE made above of their montage methods between *creation by the spectator* and *creation by the actor* was by no means fruitless. For it is just here, primarily, that a meeting occurs between the montage method on the one hand and, on the other, what is at first sight a most unexpected sphere—the sphere of the *inner* technique of the actor; that is, the forms of that *inner process* by means of which a living feeling is engendered by the actor, to display itself subsequently in his lifelike action on the stage or on the screen.

A number of systems and doctrines have been built up around the problems of the actor's performance. To be more accurate, what may be reduced to two or three systems and their various ramifications. These ramifications are distinguished not merely by terminology and nomenclature, but chiefly by the fact that the representatives of the various currents see the principal rôle played by, or place the accent of attention on, *different*

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crucial points of acting technique. Sometimes one or another school almost completely forgets an entire link in the psychological process of image-creation. Or sometimes a link that is *not crucial* is raised to foremost place. Even within such a monolith as the method of the Moscow Art Theatre, with all its community of basic postulates, there are independent currents in their interpretation.

I have no intention of delving into the shades of either essential or nomenclatural differences in methods of work with the actor. I shall pause only to consider those features of inner technique which, in their basic postulates, enter necessarily and directly into the technique of the actor's work in every case in which it actually achieves results, i.e. grips the spectator. Any actor or director is, as a matter of fact, in a position to deduce these features from his own "inner" practice, if he contrive for a moment to halt that process and examine it. The *actor's* and the *director's* technique are, in regard to this section of the problem, indistinguishable, in so far as, in regard to this section, the director is also, to some extent, an actor. Using observations deriving from this "actor's share" in my own directorial experience, I shall try by a concrete example to outline this inner technique we are now considering. In so doing it is farthest from my purpose to endeavour to say anything *new* in respect to *this* particular question.

Suppose that I be faced with the task of tomorrow playing the part of a man who, the previous evening, has lost government money at cards. Suppose the action to be full of all kinds of attendant matters, including, for example, a conversation with a completely unsuspecting wife, a scene with a daughter gazing inquisitively

at her father and noticing something strange in his behaviour, a scene of the embezzler nervously awaiting a telephone ring that is to call him to account, etc.

Suppose that a series of such scenes gradually leads the embezzler into an attempt to shoot himself, and that the task before the actor is to act the final fragment of the climax, where he arrives at the realization that there is only one way out—suicide, and his hand begins almost automatically, without his looking, to fumble in the drawers of his writing-table in search of the revolver. . . .

I believe that to-day there is hardly likely to be an actor of any training who in this scene would start by trying to "act the feeling" of a man on the point of suicide. Every one of us, instead of sweating and straining to imagine how a man would behave in such a case, would tackle the task otherwise. We should compel the appropriate consciousness and the appropriate feeling to *take possession* of us. And the authentically felt state, sensation, experience would, in direct consequence, "manifest" itself in true and emotionally correct movements, actions, behaviour. This is the way in which *are discovered the initiating elements* of correct behaviour, correct in the sense that it is appropriate to a genuinely experienced state or feeling.

The next stage of an actor's work consists in compositional working out of these elements, their cleansing from every fortuitous accretion, the refining of the postulates to the extreme degree of expressiveness. But this is the *following* stage. We are concerned now with the stage *preceding* this.

We are interested in the part of the process in which the actor becomes *possessed* by the feeling. How is this achieved, in fact "how is it done?" We have already

said that sweating and straining to represent the feeling is not the way. Instead we pursue a familiar path suited to almost all requirements.

What we do, in fact, is that we compel our imagination to depict for us a number of concrete pictures or situations appropriate to our theme. The aggregation of these pictures so imagined evokes in us the answering required emotion, feeling, understanding, actual experience. Of course the material of these pictures that our imagination draws will vary depending on the particular characteristics of the image and character of the person being played by the actor at the given moment.

Suppose that a characteristic feature of our embezzler be fear of public opinion. Then what chiefly terrifies him are not so much the pangs of conscience, the consciousness of guilt or the future trials of imprisonment as " what people are going to say ", etc.

In this case what our man, finding himself in this position, will primarily depict to himself are the terrible consequences of embezzlement in this particular direction.

It is precisely these and their combinations which will reduce the man to such a degree of despair that he will seek a fatal way out.

In real life this is exactly how it takes place. The terror resulting from awareness of responsibility feverishly starts making him draw pictures of the consequences. And the host of pictures, reacting back on the feelings, increases the terror still further, reducing the embezzler to the utmost limit of horror and despair.

Exactly the same kind is the process by means of which the actor sets to work to bring himself into a similar state in the conditions of the theatre. A difference

consists only in the circumstance that here he arbitrarily forces his imagination to paint him the self-same pictures of various consequences that in real life his imagination would paint willy-nilly.

The methods whereby the imagination is induced to do this on the basis of presumed and imaginary circumstances are not at the moment pertinent to my exposition. We are dealing with the process from the point where the imagination is, in fact, depicting whatever is necessary for the situation. It is not necessary for the actor to force himself to feel and experience the foreseen consequences. The feeling and experience, like the actions that flow from them, arise of themselves, called to life by the pictures his imagination paints. The living feeling will be evoked by the pictures themselves, by their aggregation and juxtaposition. In seeking such paths to arousing the required feeling, one can depict to oneself an innumerable quantity of situations and pictures all advancing the self-same theme in various aspects.

By way of example I shall take the first couple of situations that come to me out of all this multiplicity. Without reflecting about them I shall try to note them down just as they occur to me. "I am a criminal in the eyes of my former acquaintances. People shun me. I am ostracized by them," etc. To sense all this in the feelings, I, as said above, depict to myself concrete situations, real pictures of the fate that awaits me. Let the first be the court of justice where my case is being heard. Let the second be my return to life after serving my sentence.

We shall try to note down in all their plastic and graphic quality the multitudinous fragmentary situations

that our imagination conjures up before us in such case. They have their own way of arising with every actor.

Here I just set down the first that come into *my* mind when I set *myself* the task.

The courtroom. My case is being tried. I am in the dock. The hall is crowded with people who know me casually or well. I catch my neighbour's eyes fixed on me. For thirty years we have lived next door to each other. He notices that I have caught his gaze. His eyes slip past me with feigned abstraction. He stares with bored look at the window . . . Here is another spectator in the court. The woman living in the flat above me. Meeting my glance, she drops her gaze terrified, while watching me out of the very corners of her eyes . . . With a demonstrative half-turn my usual billiards partner presents his back to me . . . And there the corpulent owner of the billiards hall and his wife are gazing at me with a glassy stare of set insolence . . . I shrink and gaze down at my feet. I see nothing, but all around me I hear the whisper of censure and the murmur of voices. Like blow upon blow fall the words of the prosecuting counsel's peroration . . .

Equally effectually I imagine the other scene—the scene of my return from prison.

The clang of the gates closing behind me as I am let out on to the street . . . The astonished stare of the servant girl, who stops cleaning the windows of the house next door when she sees me come back to my street . . . A new name on the indicator board of the block where my flat is . . . The floor of the passage newly varnished and a new mat outside my door . . . The door of the flat next mine is opened. People I have never

seen before look out from the doorway suspiciously and inquisitively. Their children are huddling against them; they are instinctively afraid of my appearance. From below, his spectacles awry on his nose, the old porter, who still remembers me from former days, stares up the well of the staircase . . . Three or four faded letters sent to my address before my shame was generally known . . . Two or three coins jingling in my pocket . . . And then—the door of the former acquaintances who now occupy my flat closes in my face . . . My legs timidly carry me up the stairs toward the flat of the woman I used to know above and then, when there are still two steps to go, turn back. The hurriedly raised collar of a passer-by who recognizes me, etc., etc.

The above is the result of a plain jotting down of all that swarms into and flickers through my consciousness and feelings when, as director or actor, I try to get hold emotionally of the proposed situation.

After mentally placing myself in the first situation and then mentally passing through the second, doing the same with two or three analogical situations of various shades, I gradually arrive at a real perception of what awaits me and hence—at an actual experience of the hopelessness and tragedy of the situation I am in. The juxtaposition of the details of the first situation engenders one shade of this feeling. The juxtaposition of the details of the second—another. Shade of feeling is added to shade of feeling, and out of three or four shades the image of the hopelessness begins to arise in all its fullness, inseparable from the sharp emotional experience of the actual feeling of such hopelessness.

In this way, without any straining attempt to act the

feeling itself, it is successfully evoked by the assembly and juxtaposition of deliberately selected details and situations.

It is quite irrelevant here whether the description of this process, as I have set it out above, tallies or not in all its shades with that laid down by this or the other existing school of acting technique. Here the important thing is that a stage similar to that which I have described inevitably exists on the path to *formation and intensification* of emotion, whether in real life or in the technique of the creative process. Of this we can convince ourselves by the least self-observation, whether in the conditions of creation or in the circumstances of real life.

The important thing here also is the fact that the technique of creation recreates the process just as it proceeds in life, conditioned only by those special circumstances provided by art.

It should be appreciated, of course, that we have here been dealing in no wise with the entire corpus of acting technique, but only with a single link in its system.

We have, for instance, not touched here at all on the nature of the imagination itself, on the technique of "warming" it, that is, the process by means of which it succeeds in painting the pictures demanded by the theme. Lack of space does not allow of our examining these links, though their analysis would likewise, and in no less degree, confirm the soundness of our assertions. For the present we confine ourselves to the point already made, but while we bear firmly in mind that the link in the process which we have analysed occupies no greater place in the actor's technique than

does montage in the system of expressive resources of cinematography, truly, also—it occupies no less either.

* * *

But . . . excuse me, in what way does the picture outlined above from the sphere of the actor's inner technique differ in practice or in principle in its method from that which we had previously elucidated as the very essence of cinematographic montage? The distinction here is in the sphere of application and not in essence of method.

Here it is the question how to make the vital feelings and experience emerge within the actor.

There it was the question how to make the emotionally experienced image emerge in the feelings of the spectator.

Both here and there, out of the static elements, the factors given and the factors invented, and out of their juxtaposition with one another, there is engendered a dynamically emerging emotion, a dynamically emerging image.

As we see, all this is not in the least different in principle from what cinematographic montage does: we see the same sharp concretization of the theme of the feeling in the determining details of it, and the answering effect of the juxtaposition of the details, evoking the feeling itself.

As for the actual nature of these component "visions" that appear before the actor's "inward eye", their plastic (or auditory) features are completely homogeneous with the characteristics that are typical of the film shot. It was not idly that we called these "visions" above fragments and details, meaning by this individual

pictures, regarded not as a whole but in their decisive and determining properties. For, if we study the batch of " visions " noted down almost automatically, which we tried to record with the photographic accuracy of a psychological document, we shall see that these same " pictures " are just as cinematographically regular and ordered as a series of camera-angles, set-ups at various distances, pieces for editing.

One piece, for example—was in its main feature a man turning his back, obviously a frame cut by composition out of a full figure. Two heads with glassy-eyed and stubborn stare, in contrast to the lowered eyelashes from under which the woman living in the flat above stole sidelong glances at me—an obvious distinction in the distance of the set-ups. Elsewhere occurred obvious " close-ups ", of the new mat before the door and of the three envelopes. Or, taking another type of effect : the auditory long-shot of the whispering visitors in the courtroom, contrasting with the close-up of the sound of the few coins jingling in my pocket, etc., etc. The mental lens works like this with variety—it enlarges the scale and diminishes it, it acts just as a film camera does, cutting the " component representations " out within the strict limits of a film frame. It is only necessary to set numbers in front of the fragments in our batch to get a typical montage construction (or shot-script).

This example reveals the secret of how, indeed, shot-scripts are written that are genuinely emotionally moving, and not a mere scattering of peas in a numbing alternation of close-ups, mid-shots, and long-shots !

The basic validity of the method obtains in both spheres. The task consists in first creatively disintegrating

the theme into determining representations, then combining these representations and thereby making the *initiating image of the theme* come to life. The process whereby this image arises in the perceiver is inseparable from the genuine experiencing of the theme of its content. And just as inseparable from such an intense and genuine experience is the work of the director when writing his shot-script. For only a path of the kind is capable of suggesting to him the crucial representations through which really flash into perception the wholeness of the image of the theme.

Herein lies the secret of that emotionally exciting quality of exposition (as distinguished from the protocol quality of mere information) of which we spoke at the beginning of this article, and which is just as much a peculiarity of a vital performance by the actor as of vital montage cinematography.

We shall find that a similar swarm of pictures, strictly selected and reduced to the extreme laconism of two or three details, is what invariably confronts us in all the finest examples of literature.

* * *

(*In the concluding section Eisenstein analyses montage in poetic metre, with examples from Pushkin, Keats, Shelley, Milton, and Mayakovsky.—I.M.*)

BRITISH FILMS

THE SPY IN BLACK. (Odeon, Leicester Square. Columbia. Directed by Michael Powell, with Conrad Veidt, Valerie Hobson, etc.)

YOUNG MAN'S FANCY. (Leicester Square Theatre. Capad. Directed by Robert Stevenson, with Seymour Hicks, Anna Lee, Griffith Jones, etc.)

FOUR FEATHERS. (Marble Arch Pavilion. London Film Production. Directed by Korda, with Douglas Fairbanks, jr., Basil Rathbone, etc.

SHIPYARD SALLY. (Gaumont, Haymarket. Directed by Monty Banks, with Gracie Fields, Sydney Howard, etc.)

IT IS A pity that the new British films aren't in the class of *They Drive by Night*, *Owd Bob*, *The Citadel*, or even *Good-bye, Mr. Chips*. You will look at the films heading this list, and you will say "Yes, they are British", and what does that mean? Conrad Veidt is doing what he's always been made to do. The only good parts for him in recent British films have been those Raymond Massey got, and since he came to British studios we really haven't troubled to get anything new out of him. After long absence from the screen, here he is, a spy again. Well, spies are in. By making spy-films, the British are able to compete with the American and the French spy-films, and able to feel up to date. It's all right, but better if you don't think of the American and the French spy-films. It's better, too, not to think of French films when you see *Young Man's Fancy*, and *Four Feathers* practically demands that you should think of nothing at all, least of all the British

Empire, which it's about. Gracie Fields's new film is her best, and that would mean more if her others had been better. But, there it is, *Shipyard Sally* is her best and it is something that a little account is taken of the Clyde background. It is a pity, however, that when it comes to film-making we cannot do better by one whom we have allowed to fill such a peculiar position in our national life.

The trouble with these films is, as usual, the story. Their stories simply don't matter. In consequence the films are insufficiently gripping or gay. When you consider the smallness of our industry, you will realize that we cannot afford to make the pictures we do. If you haven't got capital you've got to have courage. When our film producers haven't the capital, they go cuckoo, and the only time you can tell we have capital is when the clock the cuckoo sings from is gilded. Indubitably, our films are better, our stars have more drawing power, and directors such as Powell and to a lesser degree Stevenson, are alive. But our long films, which should enter into the " entertainment " category, don't really matter. Our short films do, and in them you find progress and here and there a little of importance. On 14th July the last shots were taken in the four hundredth film made by Gaumont-British Instructional since the company started in 1934. Four hundred films in five years is something of an achievement. These have included each year over fifty purely educational pictures, dealing with the majority of subjects in the school curriculum.

At the moment, no less than thirteen subjects are in production, and there are planned twelve further, dealing with the important, exciting, but usually neglected

subject of local government in England and Wales. Another scheme is for a series of films which will treat of the British Empire, without that trade-bias which has resulted in most documentaries on this theme being pictorial paeans on pineapples or wheat. Gaumont-British plan a series of two-reelers dealing with such matters as the marine distribution of the British Empire and the development of self-government. Most important of all, it seems to me, is to do with the films called *Secrets of Life*. At one time called *Secrets of Nature*, this series has been in uninterrupted production in this country for eighteen years, and from henceforth all subjects are to be made in Dufay colour.

THE STICKLEBACK. (Gaumont-British Instructional, "Secret of Life." Directed by Mary Field. Camera, Percy Smith.)

COLOUR ADDS NEW problems for the makers of scientific and educational films. In addition to sound-continuity, they now have colour-continuity to consider, and the adherence to facts, the need for direct development, necessitated by the nature and purpose of these films doesn't allow for much latitude in continuity of any kind. Nevertheless, "We shall get over it," says Mary Field, "just as we got over sound. It makes it more interesting, really." As it is, she does very well, and her first film, *The Stickleback*, shows that colour applied to these subjects is going to add just as much to our knowledge as does the use of micro-photography, X-ray, and slow motion. I always remember in the *Chick* film, the moment when one sees the heart begin to beat and knows one is watching, actually, the beginning of life. In *The Stickleback* there is another

such moment, when suddenly you see the colour of blood in the young fish. The possibilities which this opens up need not to be stressed. There are enormous advantages and a wide range of application—one of which has already been made use of, in a flower-film, to show how a new variety will, on occasion, throw back to its original colour.

THE CITY. (G.P.O. Film Unit. Production, Cavalcanti. Direction, Ralph Elton. Commentary, H. Hodge. Camera, Henry Fowle.)

" AN ARTIST'S INSPIRATION, an architect's nightmare, a town-planner's opportunity." The speaker is Sir Charles Bressey, of the famous Report. The city is London. The opportunity was Wren's, and he took advantage of it. After the Great Fire, he planned a scheme for the rebuilding of London—a scheme so far-sighted that even to-day, with to-day's traffic and to-day's population, it would be practicable. Had it been put into effect. It wasn't, because the forces of conservatism were too strong. And so with all our machines and the boasted " speeding-up " of life (this is my contribution, not the film commentary), it takes us longer to get from, say, Whitehall to Liverpool Street than it did Gladstone.

And so Sir Charles Bressey pads round his office, picking up plans here, pointing to drawings there, showing us his own suggestions for making the best of a bad job, but almost too disgusted with the folly of mankind to dare let himself go. Finally, he returns home—" which should take fifteen minutes, but as things are will take me an hour. Good-night."

Good-night. And thanks for the humanity. Thank the Film Unit, too, for the humanity which distinguishes

its films. The Post Office side is shown in the way it solves its own traffic problem—by the famous private underground railway for mail, which gets from Liverpool Street to Paddington in ten minutes.

As things are, it is natural that transport should seem London's biggest problem. There are others. I think we mislead ourselves if we imagine life would be simpler if we could all rush at full speed from one part of the city to another, at full speed, without obstacles. The desire to rush from wherever we are is confession that we don't like being there. There is something to be said for trying to make where we are as tolerable as possible—not by increasing speed, but by lessening noise. Not by flying to country, or suburban, air, but by purifying the city's.

However, no one film can do everything. Most documentaries try to do too much. *The City* doesn't. In this, unlike its subject, it is planned, purposeful and precise. It shows us what we could only see if we had hung over London in an auto-giro for three hundred years—the growth of the City like a slowly spreading ink-blot—and, to return to one insufficiently honoured, it does remind us that Wren was not only someone who left things for precious people to preserve, but a person who, in his own way, like Leonardo, sought a plan by which all might progress.

THE ISLANDERS. (G.P.O. Film Unit. Production, J. B. Holmes. Direction, M. Harvey. Commentary, Jack Livesey. Camera, Harry Rignold (Eriskay) and Jonah Jones.)

EITHER TOO SLENDER a thread, or else one as many-fronded and as submerging as seaweed, islands are a

frightening film-subject. Yet they call out to be "done"—to us as islanders especially. This picture "does" them—beautifully. The proportions of the theme are, I think, perfectly and poetically kept. From the striking observation that islands are "the mountain peaks of a drowned landscape", we go to an outlying island. Eriskay; where the people speak their own tongue, grow their own food, are in the main self-supporting. But there is no false glamour about "simple life". Just as inhabitants of the Shetlands begged for a plane mail-service, these too reach out to the mainland—and as the little harbour develops, the film swings to another island, leaves the growing harbour of Eriskay for the grown one of Guernsey, shows the life on that island, the produce and prosperity, and then takes in an island life has left, Inner Farne, gaunt peaks, gnawed, guano-ridden. Alone, you would think; the last word, the true image of alone. And it is, though a light sweeps the heavens. A light from another island, also alone, though we call it the mainland, also drowned, and either risen, bearing life, or being reclaimed by the sea.

You will perceive, I hope, the feeling of this film—a feeling no less strong for being delicate, and implying even more than it sympathetically says. There is music by Milhaud which could not be better, either for itself or as aural accompaniment.

ROBERT HERRING

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE

WE HEAR MORE than most about the dying of magazines (and small thanks do we get for the saving of one of them). The latest to depart from the bookstalls is *Fact*. We are sorry to see it go, and were sorry that its specialist nature made it necessary for us to turn it down ourselves. It is more pleasant to consider other journals which manage to continue. The *Welsh Review* has weathered a crisis which beset it in July, and is now saved for at least six months; we hope that time will ensure it permanent support for the future. *Wales* continues under the editorship of Nigel Heseltine; it is no disrespect to him to say we shall miss the more than personality of Keidrych Rhys. *Twentieth Century Verse*, which has always managed to be neither an imitation nor the opposite of *New Verse*, adds H. B. Mallalieu as co-editor with Julian Symons. A new quarterly which we await with interest is devoted to Scottish and Irish writers; particulars will be found among our advertisements.

* * *

First editions of works by Richard Savage occur in catalogue 55, Maggs Brothers, of 50 Berkeley Square. This also includes a copy of Beckenham's biography, which was Dr. Johnson's source for his own life of the poet.

* * *

Dylan Thomas's new book, *The Map of Love*, arrived too late for review in this number, but will be considered in the next. The volume contains sixteen poems and

seven stories, some of which will be familiar to readers of this journal, in which they were first published.

* * *

Dent's have re-issued Count Franz von Lutzow's *Bohemia*, which was first issued in 1896 and has been out of print for some time. President Masaryk's original introduction has been retained, but the book has been revised and a supplement by H. A. Piehler brings the story of Bohemia right down to the present. This Everyman edition is the only complete history of Bohemia available to the general public in an English translation.

* * *

The same house will publish a novel by Jean Giono, translated by Barbara Wall, under the title *Poverty and Peace*

* * *

Two histories of costume are announced by A. and C. Black. One, *Medieval Costume in England and France*, is the third volume of Mary Houston's *Technical History of Costume*; she has illustrated it herself with 334 drawings. The other is *Scandinavian Peasant Costume* by Kathleen Primmer. This is not limited to garments but deals with headdresses, jewellery, embroidery, leatherwork, etc., in Denmark, Greenland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Lapland. Both books are published at 12*s.* 6*d.*

* * *

Robert Flaherty, the famous director of the films *Nanook*, *Moana*, *Man of Aran*, and *Elephant Boy*, is publishing with Routledge and Kegan Paul a novel of the Hudson Bay country, called *White Master*.

This firm announces also the first volume of a trilogy by the Dutch writer, Arthur van Schendel.

* * *

The air having ceased to be friendly, it is as well to remember some of the more constructive uses to which flying can be put. One of these is the subject of a book by C. A. Hart, *Air Photography Applied To Surveying*. The author has been engaged in engineering and surveying for a number of years, and in this study he attempts to bridge the gulf between the specialist and the popular book. The volume is issued by Longmans, and it is disconcerting to find that a publisher of their class should permit such a title; apart from its clumsiness, really a hyphen between the first two words is the only excuse for ignoring the quite easy adjective, aerial?

* * *

Dr. Goebbels is himself an author. Therefore he knows, presumably, what he is about when he sends out a *Reply to English Propaganda*, which is far too long to print. Quotation from this jolly screed spoils the full flavour, but that can be given in words from his own novel, *Michael*; "intellectual activity is a danger to the building of character." Dr. Goebbels' character appears most safely built.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

ENGLISH FOOD

THE ENGLISHMAN'S FOOD. J. C. Drummond and Anne Wilbraham. Cape. 12*s.* 6*d.*

OUR FOOD PROBLEM: A STUDY OF NATIONAL SECURITY. F. Le Gros Clark and Richard M. Titmuss. Penguin Special. 6*d.*

GROW YOUR OWN FOOD SUPPLY. W. E. Shewell-Cooper. English Universities Press. 6*d.*

The land and the climate of England have not changed much since the Middle Ages, but the attitude towards husbandry has altered greatly, and at the same time there has been a change in feeding habits, in respect to both quantity and quality. It would be hard to imagine a more satisfactory book on the Englishman's food than the one by Professor Drummond and Miss Wilbraham. From the contents page onwards the reader feels the authors' mastery of the subject. The arrangement of the material is satisfactory and the presentation is in a high degree illuminating, both as to cultural and agricultural development.

The subject is divided into historical periods, Medieval and Tudor England, the seventeenth century, and onwards by centuries, and in each period the production and quality of food for rich and poor are considered, with details of the deficiency diseases and contemporary views on food, in so far as these are known. Many books have attempted to convey an idea of the Englishman's food at different historical periods, but most have failed

to present a convincing picture, because their authors did not give a perspective of the whole subject.

The difficulty in dealing adequately with a problem that touches our life intimately, like food, is that we tend to keep to our own prejudices. We need a framework of facts that are both objective and at the same time stimulating. As an instance, the significance of the points made in the excellent little book on *Our Food Problem* is more apparent after reading the larger work, because while the latter gives the history of food in our island, the former deals most searchingly with the current problem. Mr. le Gros Clark puts the question whether we are acclimatizing ourselves as a nation to the curious world of which we form a part, and from the details he gives it is evident that our food policy is not being managed on a realistic basis. The needs of the population in the matter of food are now known (the growth of that knowledge is one of the fascinating features of Drummond's and Wilbraham's work), the capacity of our soil to produce a proportion of that food is now known also, but the *will* to make full use of the resources by the nation is hindered by our political ideology. Even a threat of war has not driven us to relate the matter to the practical husbandry of our own land. We have not yet learnt to view the resources of England as the common heritage of Englishmen for their proper sustenance and enjoyment. Large issues will be raised, issues which the bold Russian experiment of State farms have not altogether solved. Before we can even begin to think clearly on the immediate problems that face us in making the best of a valuable island, or as socially minded people concerned that all have at least the necessaries of life, we must know the facts, and we

shall be helped by the clear thought of the authors of these two books.

Grow Your Own Food Supply is the best short book on the subject that a not undiligent reading of the literature has so far discovered. It does not give humdrum advice, but reasoned explanations, and if the small household producer follows the advice he will have a pleasant variety for his table, and not a dull round of commonplace food.

The security of the nation both in peace and war depends on a full use of the land. In war we may starve if we do not grow more, in times of peace we are less resistant to disease if we do not have certain foods in a fresh state. Those who take these problems seriously will be glad to find in these three books the careful thought of others on the subject.

JOHN RICKMAN

ENGLISH LIFE

MEN AND THE FIELDS. ADRIAN BELL. Batsford. 8*s.* 6*d.* With drawings and lithographs by John Nash.

MADE IN ENGLAND. DOROTHY HARTLEY. Methuen. 15*s.*

Men and the Fields is an attempt to paint a word-picture of the countryman at work. *Made in England* is a pack of details, illustrated by sketches and photographs, of the kind of things many countrymen are working at. The second book paints the more vivid picture. All through Adrian Bell's book you sense the conscious effort, the balancing of contrast, the

careful rendering of appropriate atmosphere. It succeeds as far as it goes. You can smell the earth in it, feel the wind on the heath and all that. But it's all rather arty, like the illustrations. You feel that his men and his fields are only book-material. They don't seem to matter in themselves. He covers the countryman's year in fourteen chapters—each one a separate little picture of people, houses, and scenery. Here and there he tells a good story. There's a far-away and long-ago, twilightish, nostalgic, peat-and-tweeds background. This may be attractive if you're in the mood. I didn't actively dislike it, but it made me feel sleepy.

Dorothy Hartley's *Made in England* attempts nothing so grand. It sets out to be no more than a series of accurate notes, but it gets fired from within by the writer's enthusiasm, and becomes a series of exciting stories about wood, straw, stone, metal, bricks, leather, wool and the rest, in the hands of the country craftsman. She treats work as it should be treated; as the one really satisfying activity of man.

In her preface, she says: "A normal healthy man desires to work. The interest in his work is the growing point of a man's life, and once this growing point is broken his driving power but presses against a blunted faculty. No artificial diversions or 'leisure' occupations substituted on the recreational plane of his existence will compensate him. It is as fundamentally wrong for a man only to work to live, as to live only for play."

It's good to come across someone who can recognize and express this fundamental truth. The worker himself is often too deeply conscious of it to be aware of it. It's simply a part of his being. His trade union leaders,

who should do his talking, seem to be as unaware of anything but the cash angle as are his employers. And even the modern reformers and revolutionaries lose sight of this human pride in workmanship—harping instead solely on food, clothing, and shelter. Perhaps trade union leaders are aware of it but fear to express it since its semblance has been used so often as a trap by employers in the struggle to cut production costs. It's an ideal, like the Christian ideal, that has collected so much dubious lip-service in the past that men have now become suspicious of anyone who loudly professes it. But it seems to me that it's got to be loudly professed—even proudly professed. It's got to be talked about and shouted about until it bulks big in the modern mind. If it doesn't, our present ha'porth of civilization will lose its vital powers and crumble. There won't—as Coombes's *These Poor Hands* makes so clear—be any human point in civilization.

Meanwhile, here is a book that will help to keep the spirit of craftsmanship alive ; a book to be read straight through, to be dipped into for favourite bits, and finally to be kept on the reference shelf—a book worth calling a book.

HERBERT HODGE

SUFFOLK SCENE. JULIAN TENNYSON. Blackie. 8*s.* 6*d.*

THIS VERY USEFUL companion for those contemplating a leisurely tour in East Anglia is written by a " native " who has steeped himself in the historical associations of his county. He leads us into the byways and presents

many features which the hasty traveller must pass by. We are taken through the Constable country which is presented with such sympathetic understanding that, if it were possible, more dignity is lent to the artist's work. In the several sections, each devoted to a feature of the landscape, the author shows a deep love and understanding of its historical associations, the most interesting perhaps being those devoted to the rivers and the fame of Suffolk, taking us over a period from 1727 to 1881. Suffolk's famous churches are not neglected, though the many fine Tudor buildings to be found in the villages receive scant recognition. An Epilogue—Suffolk's Rise and Fall—will amply compensate for the by no means negligible tedium caused by the writing.

M. ELVEY

WALL SHRUBS AND HARDY CLIMBERS. W. J. BEAN. Illustrated. Putnam. *7s. 6d.*

ONE HUNDRED AND fifty pages of this book are given over to an alphabetical list of climbers and wall shrubs. Though the author does not waste words, his list is no mere catalogue, for he gives excellent description of each plant. In the previous twenty odd pages, he has dealt succinctly with such necessary matters as soil and root conditions, pruning, wall plants for narrow spaces, and shrubs for north walls. There is thus everything arranged in exemplary order for the beginner to learn and for the expert to refresh his memory. Forty-seven photographic plates add to the value of a book whose excellence is such as might be expected from one who was curator of

the Royal Botanic gardens at Kew, and the publishers have served their subject well by putting out the book at a reasonable price.

LAMBERT STONE

THE HANDBOOK OF BRITISH BIRDS. Vol. 3 (Hawks to Ducks). H. F. WITHERBY, F. C. R. JOURDAIN, N. F. TICEHURST, and B. W. TUCKER. Illustrated. Witherby. 25*s*. (Subscription, 5 volumes, 5 gns.).

NOT ONLY IS this handbook the best book on British birds; it is also a model of what a work of reference should be. As comprehensive as present knowledge can make it it yet avoids confusion and is very simple to use. It is full of every variety of information, some of which seems to have a wider significance than the subject might suggest; for instance, the mute swan, common on all our waters, is much less ferocious and aggressive towards other birds in its wild state than when it has come into contact with man. The book is freely illustrated with competent pictures of all the birds; those of ducks on the wing will be of special use in identification; Peter Scott has drawn the geese, in charming and lively sketches which lend an added distinction to the book.

D. STURGE MOORE

THE LIBRARY AND THE COMMUNITY. L. STANLEY JAST. NELSON. 2*s*.

IN 1850 LAYARD discovered in two small rooms—at Koujunjik on the Tigris, opposite the modern Mosul—a huge quantity of tablets and cylinders of baked clay. The cuneiform inscriptions which they bore recorded

amongst other things, wars, royal decrees, legends, magic, science; the tablets were arranged in series, were catalogued and were in the charge of a librarian. They were the remains of the earliest library known to exist, that of the Assyrian monarch Assurbani-pal. This is the starting point of Mr. Jast's extremely interesting but very brief historical survey of the beginnings of libraries and of the early days of the library movement in this country, which precedes an account of the public library service as it exists to-day. The desirability or not of newsrooms (these are seldom provided in new libraries now), the methods which libraries are using to attract readers—a technique which is new to the profession of librarianship—and the question of official censorship are some of the matters Mr. Jast mentions as he deals with the normal departments of the modern public library. He describes the means by which it is possible for any book, whether in print or not, to be borrowed for any member of a public library, describes the work of the National Central Library and of the National Library for the Blind, and makes a strong appeal for the development of children's libraries which he considers are not yet achieving all they might. In his chapter on county libraries he summarizes outspokenly, but without undue emphasis, the library service which these offshoots of the education service provide, and compares it (to the disadvantage of the counties) with that given by the municipal authorities in urban areas. A fairly full, but not full enough, index completes one of the most valuable books which has appeared on this important branch of the adult education movement in this country.

L. MONTAGUE HARROD

LIBRARY STAFFS. LIONEL R. MCCOLVIN. Allen and Unwin. 5*s*.

THE AUTHOR OF this book was Chairman of the Library Association's "Conditions of Service Committee" which in 1936 drew up a very useful set of recommendations. Since then he has become Honorary Secretary of the Library Association, and has visited America, where he studied the entirely different staffing conditions which prevail in public libraries there. This book is an examination of conditions in England and contains suggestions for the more effective staffing of English libraries. The chief change which he would see is the division of staffs into professional and non-professional as is done in America. He rightly contends that it is more economical and more satisfactory to have work carefully graded according to the qualifications and abilities of the staff, endeavouring always to give assistants work which they can do well and enjoy doing, but not at the risk of limiting their experience. As there are comparatively few branches of library work which *must* be done by fully qualified professional people, the Library Association's examinations should be remodelled to cater for both types of assistant, who, incidentally, should be recruited by different methods. Mr. McColvin envisages a better educational system as follows: (*a*) full-time tuition, for a reasonable period, for potential professionals and consequently, (*b*) a properly equipped body of professional tutors, (*c*) proper training for non-professionals, (*d*) opportunity for both types to work in good libraries for at least a short period, and (*e*) facilities for advanced studies. The advantages of exchanges of assistants between libraries is mentioned

and it is stated that the Library Association could easily, organize more widespread exchanges. The division of staff into professional and non-professional is the basis of all the arguments and suggestions in this book, which is both stimulating and controversial.

L. MONTAGUE HARROD

THE CRIMINAL IN SOCIETY. H. T. F. RHODES. Lindsay Drummond. *7s. 6d.*

MR. RHODES'S SUBTITLE is "A Review of the Fundamentals of Criminology". In fact his book is a series of notes on the views of social reformers from Aristotle to Sir Samuel Hoare. Three-quarters of the book is given up to theories which though interesting to the curiosity hunter bear little relation to the practice, detection, and treatment of crime to-day. In his previous books the author gave some interesting examples of the methods of modern criminals. But in *The Criminal in Society* too many pages are devoted to explaining away Lombroso and his successors—surely no one to-day takes the theory of the criminal type seriously?—and only two pages are allowed in the chapter on punishment for contemporary practice.

The author has a habit of stopping short just when he has aroused one's interest. Why is the incidence of crime greater in democratic Switzerland than in totalitarian states, while crime in England and France is about one-third and one-fifth as prevalent as in Germany? Mr. Rhodes leaves this problem unanswered. And what are "reformatory" methods for homosexuality practised in Germany? Does this mean

psychological treatment, occupational therapy, or institutionalism? We are left wondering.

Some of the all too few references to present methods in England show the author's lack of first-hand knowledge. Borstal boys, he says, are "not even confined behind locked doors but are subject to a system of parole". This is only true of two or possibly three of the dozen Borstals for boys. It is not true of the remainder nor of the only Borstal we have for girls. Mr. Rhodes refers to the introduction of psychological methods into courts of summary jurisdiction as though this were the general practice throughout the country. The deaf and doddering octogenarians who sleep on many of our county Benches would burst a blood vessel if they knew what accusations were being levelled against them. Unfortunately there is no chance of their reading Mr. Rhodes's or any other book on criminology.

CICELY MCCALL

OURSELVES AND THE PRESS. PETER HOOD. John Lane. *7s. 6d.*

IT WOULD COST more than a million pounds to finance a national newspaper; the Press ranks twelfth in financial importance amongst the industries of this country and it is probable that more people are conscious of its existence than of any other. The problems of this huge and complex industry have naturally attracted attention and two recent publications have explored the ground in some detail, the P.E.P. report on the Press and Wickham Steed's Penguin. Mr. Hood does not add very greatly to our knowledge, though he makes some

sound points. The book is, I take it, meant to be "popular", but I found it difficult to read, verbose, involved, and lacking clarity; this was, no doubt, intentional since the author says: "It is rarely necessary to trouble much with the quality of writing; it is the subject matter which is really of consequence,"—tough on the "subject matter". And, again, writing of the Areopagitica: "It is true that (it) is illustrated by constant references to biblical, classical, and mythical names in the manner usual with all writers up to the nineteenth century; but *in spite of* (my italics) this it remains one of the greatest records of the subject."

Mr. Hood has some constructive suggestions to make. With regard to advertisements, upon which most periodicals are largely dependent, he would like an independent authority which could give some guarantee of truthfulness and quality. Admirable as the suggestion is, the difficulties are considerable, one need only remember that patent medicines are amongst the most lucrative forms of newspaper advertising to realize the forces with which such an institute would have to contend. With regard to news Mr. Hood suggests an independent publication giving "straight" news which by its existence would raise the general standard of news presentation. The difficulty is that beyond the ultimate fact, news must be interpreted both emotionally and intellectually to gain significance, sensationalism is the easy and obvious course to adopt, but even where this is avoided there are other difficulties. Quite apart from the distortion enforced by the social and economic conditions under which the paper is produced, there is exhaustion. The man who daily has to present and elucidate diverse and changing facts, many of which

come new to him, without time for proper thought, destroys those qualities which singled him out for so important a task.

D. STURGE MOORE

TALES OF OLD INNS. RICHARD KEVERNE. Illustrated. Collins. *3s. 6d.*

IT IS A pity that information on inns cannot be tabulated once and for all. At present every author on the subject is at liberty to tell us the same tales, to write of the same inns, and the more familiar these are the more likely are we in our turn to miss data about the lesser-known, the lost, and the vanishing. Mr. Keverne reveals much, but also repeats much. Most use will be derived, therefore, from the plan of his book, which takes inns county by county, and from well-chosen illustrations. These make it remarkable that the book can be put out at so low a price and, though "featuring" Trust Houses rather frequently, are in themselves worth it.

G. R. N. LIST

RACING ENGLAND. PATRICK R. CHALMERS. Illustrated. Batsford. *12s. 6d.*

ALL WHO ASSIST, in whatever capacity, at the ritual known as racing in England will be grateful to Patrick Chalmers and the publishers of this book. His is no rhapsody of "the Turf", but a sanely sympathetic account of horse-racing in this country, from its evolution down to its present-day practice. He writes not only of trainers, jockeys, and their mounts, but of bookmakers, plungers, the Jockey Club, and race-courses. The text is illustrated with reproductions of

prints, paintings, and photographs, which play an excellent Mailed Fist to the Brown Jack of the writing.

K. B. N. WALL

ANIMALS AS FRIENDS. JAMES FISHER and MARGARET SHAW. Dent. 6*s*.

IF YOU HAVE never tried to keep a Mynal, an Axolotl, a Chipmunk, an Alligator, or just a Dog or Cat, now is the moment to begin, for if you follow this book's instructions the health and happiness of your animal and certainly your own happiness, are ensured.

James Fisher, assistant curator at the London Zoo, and Margaret Shaw, well-known in Fleet Street and at the Zoo, have made an admirable job of this friendly and yet authoritative guide. The person and habits of each possible pet—and there are many more than you would think could be kept by the average boy, girl, or grown-up—are fully described under headings. These include origin, habitat, distribution, length of life, care and food, housing, behaviour, breeding, and don'ts. ("Don't forget that you can't cure a sick lizard.") A quantity of valuable information is set out simply and clearly in a way suitable for child or adult. There are many good diagrams, by Geoffrey Salter, of hutches, aviaries, aquarium, nestboxes and other man-made products for animal, bird, fish, or reptile.

Sixteen fascinating photographs by W. Suschitzky ornament a book which is humane, unsentimental, and yet sensitive. It is certainly to be acquired by everyone who possesses a living but non-human friend.

LORNA LEWIS

AN ENGLISHMAN ABROAD

ROBBERY UNDER LAW. Evelyn Waugh. Chapman and Hall. 10*s.* 6*d.*

Boxers write articles on God. Fan-dancers discuss eternity, aviators the quantum theory. In the popular press, a reputation once acquired will sell anything. But hitherto this principle has been confined to journalism.

Now Mr. Evelyn Waugh, known for his novels, has become an authority on Mexico as the result of an eight weeks' visit. The value of his book, *Robbery under Law*, is trivial, but so little is known of Mexico that there is a danger that his curious picture of that country will be accepted as correct. For that reason alone, it is necessary to expose a few of his errors.

In 280 pages Mr. Waugh tries to deal with the whole present situation of Mexico, with background of historical detail. The book is untidily arranged, but he deals at length with the oil and church questions, discursively with the labour situation and relations with the U.S.A., and facetiously with the Six Year Plan. There is also a scrapbook chapter, called Tourist Mexico.

Rather than examine the whole book cursorily, I shall deal with two individual points in more detail, partly because these two points are important in themselves and partly because they are symptomatic of the general treatment.

Since Hidalgo raised the cry of Independence on 16th September, 1810, Mexico has been fighting two battles, the first an external battle for freedom from the dominance of Spanish and later American and European imperialism, the second an internal struggle to return

the land to the peasants and give industry to the workers. These two aims, nationalist and socialist, have been inextricably intertwined. There have been two constant groups of interests in opposition to one another, the imperialists' and the catholic church's on the one hand, the workers' and peasants' on the other. Owing to the lack of any trained revolutionary party, however, the struggle has been violent, protracted, and often futile. Time and experience have eliminated certain issues and made others clearer. Progress, the slow upward progress of the spiral, has been made. But even now the issues are not clear-cut to many Mexicans.

By the conclusion of the Mexican revolution, which lasted roughly from 1910–1920, one thing, however, was clear. If the painful repetition of revolution and betrayal was to be eliminated, it was necessary for peasants and workers to organize into trade unions, federations, and peasant leagues. In 1918 the Regional Confederation of Mexican Workers (CROM) was founded by Luis Morones.

This union was not "organized on Marxist principles", as Mr. Waugh says on page 56, but on the lines of craft unionism. It started as a genuine labour organization, but as the result of the corruption of Morones it generated into a labour racket, preying on employers by blackmail, enriching labour bosses and betraying the workers. In 1923 it was affiliated to the American Federation of Labour. This should be sufficient evidence that it is not "a part of the international communistic organization which developed in the great cities of the world twenty-five years ago" (page 147). The CROM leaders succeeded in keeping their hold on the labour movement by means of thuggery and strong-arm men. They so

manipulated the labour laws that independent militant unions were forced into joining the CROM if they were to be recognized. Even so, certain of these unions stood out and these unions, of the existence of which Mr. Waugh is apparently ignorant, were to an extent under communist influence. In the presidency of Portes Gil, the CROM was suppressed by the same strong-arm methods it had used to win power; but Gil, having employed the independent unions to suppress the CROM, then turned on them and either murdered or jailed the communist leaders on the prison islands, Tres Marias. In 1936 a new federation of trade unions, the Confederation of Mexican Workers, CTM, was formed with the lawyer Lombardo Toledano at its head. The CTM was based on industrial unionism, and is affiliated to the C.I.O. The CROM persists in an attenuated form, but among the CROM the majority follow Treviño, a progressive leader opposed to Morones; and rivalry between the two unions has been called off by mutual agreement.

Now let us take Mr. Waugh's explanation of church persecution. He maintains firstly that though in certain cases corruption and immorality existed among the priesthood, that was not generally so. Secondly, that rich as the church was, those riches were necessary in the administration of such social services as education and medicine—the land holdings being "experimental farms". Thirdly, anti-clericalism was forced on the Mexicans by a minority, witness the 1927 rebellion against Calles.

His first point may or may not be true; it is of no great importance compared to the second point. By the end of the eighteenth century, the archbishop of Mexico was receiving a salary of 130,000 pesos, while

the bishops of Puebla, Guadalajara, and Morelia (then Vallodolid), received little less. The church was immune from taxation and its capital constantly increased.[1] Luis Alamán, a catholic apologist, estimated that at the beginning of the nineteenth century the church owned more than half the land of Mexico. No exact figures exist; but the holdings were certainly so large that the phrase "experimental farms" becomes ridiculous. Apart from land, the church lent money at interest, and in the estimation of H. B. Parkes (*History of Mexico*),[1] held two-thirds of the capital in circulation.

As for the social services to which this wealth was directed according to Mr. Waugh. As the church grew richer, its social expenditure shrank. By the end of the eighteenth century, there were only ten primary schools in the whole of Mexico. And in a country where censorship of heresy was as rigorous, if not as brutal, as in modern Germany, literature never came to life.

"The church had its bad periods," Mr. Waugh would admit. "But to-day it has its renaissance." I wonder. In the small town where I lived, there was one priest to five churches. There was no doctor till five years ago. Charms and simples were held to cure those who did not die outright. A friend of mine went to the priest for help in sponsoring a plan to bring a doctor to the town. She wanted a penny a week from each family, and the priest's moral support. When she

[1] Mr Waugh makes a great point of the fact that the Mexican clergy are deprived of civil rights. He does not take into account the fact that the clergy used to enjoy the right of immunity, *fuero*, from civil trial, and that the counter-revolutionary slogan during the nineteenth century was "Fueros y religion!" This explains the loss of clerical civil rights.

[1] H. B. Parkes' *History of Mexico*, Methuen, 16*s*., a clearly written and scholarly history from earliest times, which should be read as an antidote for *Robbery Under Law*.

had finished, the priest answered, " We want money for a new organ."

Mr. Waugh's third point typifies his method of argument. He states that Calles persecuted the church at the instigation of the CROM and as a result the peasants rose in a body to defend their faith (pp. 236–7). Now for facts.

In April, 1927, the Cristeros (so-called because their slogan was Cristo Rey, Christ the King) dynamited the Mexico–Guadalajara train and a hundred people were either killed or burned to death. This body of Cristeros, composed of fanatics and bandits, were attended by priests, who, the bishops explained, were merely acting as chaplains to the men.

This atrocity aroused so much indignation among the people as a whole that armed forces were dispatched to wipe out the Cristeros. Unfortunately the generals in charge of the troops improved the occasion by falling on catholics, whose only offence was that they were rich. Many peaceful citizens were then forced into the ranks of the Cristeros and the rebellion became more formidable than it would have been otherwise. But this was *not* due to the CROM and it was *not* the spontaneous uprising that Mr. Waugh maintains.

Wherever I went in Mexico, I asked trade unionists what their attitude was to the church. Their answers were summed up in the words of what Mr. Waugh would call " a CTM boss " in Morelia, the centre of the Cristero region of Michoacan. This " boss " was a little man in dungarees who worked from nine in the morning to ten at night. I had read a denunciation of communism and trade unionism in one of the churches and I asked him what he thought of it. " We don't trouble," he

answered, " everybody here's religious, but everybody belongs to the trade union. When the priest talks about God, they listen. When he runs down the union, they know he's talking through his hat." That is the present attitude under Cárdenas.

Under Calles and his stooges it was different. Religion was attacked viciously. Anti-clericalism (not atheism) flourished among many sections of the public, because of the consistent financial and spiritual support given by the church to the counter-revolutionary forces. But this anti-clericalism was merely the negative aspect of Mexican socialism. Calles, by no means the puppet Mr. Waugh thinks him, intended to make terms with American capitalists and diverted the revolution from its aims of positive socialism against the catholic church, thereby giving himself an alibi as a revolutionary.

As soon as Cárdenas came into power, the Red Shirts under Cannabal were disbanded, persecution of the church was discouraged, and the positive aspect of the revolution was brought forward again. The President realized, just as well as Mr. Waugh does, that the priests were romanticized as martyrs under persecution. At liberty, many were walking arguments for anti-clericalism. " We don't want priests," one worker told me. " We are content with religion."

The question I have been asking myself is why, when the persecution of the church reached its height in the last years of the nineteen-twenties, two devout catholic converts like Messrs. Graham Greene and Evelyn Waugh should wait until the year after the expropriation of the Mexican oilfields to expose these horrors. Can it be, I ask myself, that the catholic church is still stringing along with big business? And then I

read about the underground catholic workers, inspired by the memory of the gallant Cristeros, plotting to overthrow the Toledano-Cárdenas-Bolshevik-Nazi-Japanese-Masonic régime, and I realize that I am wrong again. It's just coincidence.

ARTHUR CALDER-MARSHALL

AN ENGLISHMAN IN WALES

THESE POOR HANDS. B. L. COOMBES. Gollancz. 7*s.* 6*d.*

I FEEL THE title of this book was a mistake. *These Poor Hands* suggests in self-pity, a modern equivalent of "Don't go down the mine, Daddy". Coombes is actually free from the least taint of it. His sub-title, "The Autobiography of a Miner Working in South Wales," fits far more accurately both the book and the style. Coombes must surely be one of the most modest men who ever attempted autobiography. He tells us hardly anything about himself—no more than the minimum of personal detail necessary to explain his reactions to the mine. In the ordinary way, I should have been disappointed. But this particular book, I think, gains in force and clarity because of it. The picture comes out stark and clean—a plain record of life as the miner lives it.

His story covers the period from just before the War to the present day. It's mainly a tale of rationalization and its effect on the individual miner; a tale of the constant effort to increase the production per man

employed, with its apparently inevitable results—in a capitalist economy—of increasing danger, decreasing wages, and increasing unemployment.

A new coal-cutting machine is installed. The younger and more vigorous men are naturally chosen to work it. They are egged on by the management to break records. In all good faith they make a tremendous spurt, beyond even their normal powers. The spurt lasts for perhaps a week. They chuck out their chests in justifiable pride, and plan the spending of the big money they'll be earning for the future. A few weeks later their spurt is set up as the normal rate of production. And the wage rates for the whole mine are " adjusted " accordingly.

This speeding-up not only reduces the payment for the work done ; it increases the danger. The youngsters out to break records scamp safety precautions. And when their spurt is adopted as the standard speed, the other miners have to take similar risks. The good workman has to become a bad one to keep his job.

That's the hell of it. The danger itself is bad enough. (No. You don't get used to it. I thought you did, until I read this book.) When you know safety precautions are being scamped you work in constant fear ; and then, escaping, lie down to sleep to start up again in fear, dreaming what might have happened. All that's bad, and worse than bad. But the truly awful part, it seems to me, is this compulsion to scamp one's job. If they are going to take away our last shreds of self-respect—the workman's one remaining pride—what point is there in our keeping on at all ? What point is there in anything ?

You've got to have something to believe in. A common workman can't rise above the folly of human

beliefs, and eat, drink, and be merry. He hasn't got the price.

You need to read *These Poor Hands*. It's a fine bit of work. I hope Coombes is feeling proud of it.

HERBERT HODGE

THE NEW SCOTLAND

THE LOWLANDS OF SCOTLAND. GEORGE SCOTT-MONCRIEFF. Illustrated. Batsford. 8*s.* 6*d.*

THE ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND. HUGH MACDIARMID. Illustrated. Batsford. 10*s.* 6*d.*

SCOTLAND UNDER TRUST. ROBERT HURD. Illustrated. A. and C. Black. 6*s.*

NEARLY EVERY SUMMER there issue from the press a few wishy-washy books of the "ben and glen" type about Scotland. This summer, however, has seen the almost simultaneous publication of three very different and very much better books. All are written by young men, and though they deal with different subjects in Scotland they are informed with the same purpose—a genuine love of the country itself, of the traditional Scottish elements in scenery, language, architecture, and custom, a love that is by no means complacent but is angry at the disappearance of these under the wave of standardization.

George Scott-Moncrieff, nephew of "C.K.", deals with the Lowlands, a subject that is only second to the Highlands in provoking sentimental twaddle. Mr. Scott-Moncrieff, however, will have none of this. His beautifully illustrated book surveys that sturdy and once independent piece of country that stretches from Galloway to Aberdeenshire. It contains some excellent descriptions of the countryside and some

fierce denunciation of the way the land and the people are being allowed to go to waste owing to the neglect of farming and the influence of the jerry-building speculator. Mr. Scott-Moncrieff is by no means without hope. He points to those places where the true Scottish Lowland spirit survives and feels that in time things may yet be saved.

Hugh MacDiarmid, otherwise known as "C. M. Grieve", is probably the best known nationalist Scottish writer, and, living for the last few years in the Shetland Islands, he has not only been influenced by a love of the Isles themselves but by a desire to get as far away from the Border as possible. He has the poet's licence to exaggerate and some of his critics would say that he has done so before now. His book, however, is more descriptive than political, and covers not only the Hebrides (so often written about), but also the Shetland Isles, which not only by their remoteness but by their traditions of farming and seafaring are equally worthy of study. MacDiarmid is a lover of island life, seeing in it the background for a true individualistic peace at this time. Scotland has nearly five hundred islands round her coast. It is his urgent plea that life on these islands should be conserved and nourished.

Robert Hurd has written a rather more practical and smaller book. As secretary of the Scottish National Trust he has been working for the past few years in the admirable task of conserving the best in Scottish architecture of the past, and in encouraging the best that is new. *Scotland under Trust* is an account of the work the Trust has been doing and makes admirable reading, supported by some first-class photographs.

MICHAEL MURRAY

THE OLD ENGLAND

OLD ENGLISH HOUSEHOLD LIFE. G. JEKYLL and S. R. JONES. Illustrated. Batsford. 7*s.* 6*d.*

THERE IS ROOM for a clear-minded survey of the development of utensils and furniture in English household life. But it would need to be done differently from this volume which, says one of the authors in his preface, " incorporates much of the matter set down by the late Miss Gertrude Jekyll " in her book of the same title, first published in 1925. We receive an overdose of the picturesque; though the book goes through the ages, " plague " and " sanitation " are not to be found in the index, and it is typical of the authors' outlook that one sees " ingle-nook ", but not " inn ". Like the same publishers' *Old English Customs*, this is an opportunity missed, and whilst it cannot be said to add to our scientific knowledge, it plays into the hands of those who greet " old English " with a groan. A pity. And a pity, too, that the title is inaccurate, for why is Wales included in *English* life, when Scotland's omitted, and why are the households those of the country, never of the town? Perhaps a village is more " olde Englishe " ? That would explain why there are pictures of thatching, which looks so pretty, but no detailed explanation of the craft.

LAMBERT STONE

THE ENGLISH CHILD IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. ROSAMOND BAYNE POWELL. John Murray. 15*s.*

THE AUTHOR WRITES a detailed account of children, active and passive, in the eighteenth century. An enormous amount of reading and research in museums

has gone into the making of this book, and a long list of references should make it a good " resource " book for students, as many of the books consulted would not come into their ken.

It is emphatically a " book on the subject ", wholesomely free from sentimental repining or lurid reconstruction. It is hard, down the range of two centuries, to visualize a child being rebuked for playing with the dog on Sunday, or being sent to work in a cold factory at 6 a.m. Probably it is Miss Powell's intentional avoiding of extremes, but one could wish she had given even one extract from the later commission on child labour; a few of the " wake nails " from the " rest benches ".

It is right out of her careful period, and so no reflection upon the author for not including it, but I should like anyone reading *The English Child in the Eighteenth Century* to take down and relive again the scene in *Harthover Hall*, when chimney-sweep Tom, after alternately swaggering and crying at his master's heels, drops down the wrong chimney into the little golden girl's bedroom —and the subsequent hue and cry past the dronning Dames' school, across the moors, to where the beck, clear and cool, ripples among its mosses. (If the reader does this he will realize why it is suggested.)

DOROTHY HARTLEY

STROLLING PLAYERS AND DRAMA IN THE PROVINCES, 1660–1765. SYBIL ROSENFELD, M.A. Cambridge. 15*s*.

THIS IS A book full of information about the dates of plays, about their revivals and casts, in Norwich, Bath,

Canterbury, York, and elsewhere between mid-seventeenth and mid-eighteenth centuries—a period about which we had little collected information till now. All the plays and players are noted in a 27-page index.

For all these facts we are, of course, grateful; they are essential to study. But, hidden under the catalogued facts is much vivid information not indexed and not critically discussed—here, I think, the theatre-student will find his greatest fascination. Here he will meet six references to stage boxes that practically explain the origin of boxes, but he must interpret and index them himself. He will find over sixty references to scenery, but again there is no guide to them and no discussion; and the mentions of the numerous early provincial theatres are not indexed. He will meet with the *curtain*, with the clamant *players' drum* that heralded performances, with *footlights*, *flyings and sinkings*, with the interesting *green* things of the old theatre—the *green curtain*, the *green baize*, the *green boxes*, all of which have a tradition—with *leaps*, *pigeon holes*, *slips*, *traps*, *wings*, even with the fascinating cant phrases of the brotherhoods of players, such as "capital distinctions," "player queer checkers," "dismissing," "lengths" in study, "saddle taxes," "woman in the straw," "taking the town," and the "truncheons" of tragedy. Yet none of these is indexed nor its points expanded.

Whence it is clear that there is much in *Strolling Players* that is worth having, but the book does not relieve us from work of our own if we want to get a picture of those old days in proper focus; we have to take the effort of shifting the hand that holds the glass or the details of the vision do not become clear or real.

Against its catalogue-quality the book has vivid flashes, such as the line quoted from S. W. Ryley: "We players are a set of merry undone dogs," and Penkethman's wicked rhyme in one of his prologues :—

"As all the world was first made out of Chaos,
From a dark, dirty Barn I rais'd this Play-house."

RICHARD SOUTHERN

REMEMBER FRED KARNO? EDWIN ADELER and CON WEST. Illustrated. John Long. 12*s.* 6*d.*

IT READS FAMILIARLY—penniless boy, circus youngster, "artiste," manager of artistes; success, stars and cigars, bigger and bigger ventures. Then decreasing returns, bankruptcy; a new start, in a new and harder world, and finally, content in a cottage.

Where have we heard it before? The films? That is what one thinks now. But there was a time when what "could only happen on the films" did, and only could, happen with the English stage. That is why this book is to be reviewed. It isn't good either as a book or as biography; it is too bitsy for one and too biased for the other. But it is written in that ingratiating idiom of the theatrical gent being literary, which is itself an English product of note, and it is the life of the man who "discovered" Chaplin and Laurel, not to mention Will Hay. The authors think that man and his achievements so remarkable that the query in their title should be superfluous; this is a pity, for the most remarkable thing is, as usual with stage people, the strange forms their ambition takes. Neither Karno, nor the many well-known people associated with him come alive in these pages, but the business background is bustling, and so

here is a book which only England could produce, on a subject only England has; for music-hall is as different from burlesque and vaudeville as was Karsino from Monte Carlo.

H. K. FISHER

SELECTED BOOKS

CHILDREN IN THE CINEMA. RICHARD FORD. Allen and Unwin. *7s. 6d.*

THOUGH THERE HAVE been endless earnest inquiries into the effect of films on children, this is the first more or less comprehensive survey of the subject in book form. Mr. Ford usefully collates and summarizes previous experiences and investigations and adds the specialized knowledge he has obtained as organizer of children's matinees for the Odeon circuit. The book's main value is as a factual survey of a subject too often enveloped in airy theorizing. As Mr. Ford himself remarks, his qualifications for writing it are more practical than academic. He is aware of the first-rate opportunities in the subject for social and psychological research and if and when these are taken the worth of his book will be specially appreciated.

Mr. Ford estimates that five million children between the ages of five and fifteen go to the cinema regularly in this country—most of them once a week, many more often. The majority see the ordinary programmes where " U " films are shown, though the certificate is by no means a guarantee of suitability. The number of cinemas holding regular matinees for children, with specially chosen films, is increasing and Mr. Ford estimates that these are attended by about 500,000

children weekly. The children's matinee may not be the perfect solution for the problem; but, given programmes intelligently composed, the child is more likely to enjoy himself there than at a performance intended for adults. Until we have children's films and children's cinemas, progress may be measured by the increase in the number of children's matinees. At present they are attended by only one child in ten.

" The adult's film is rarely the child's film," Mr. Ford remarks. He confirms suspicions or stirs memories, according to one's age. " Children are bored—enormously bored—by love-making on the screen. The mere sight of a woman who seems likely to fulfil this function in the story may easily provoke loud disapproval from the children. The reason is obvious. Love-making is an activity which holds up the action of the film." " Action " crystallizes the essentials of a film which is popular with children. Therefore Westerns are first favourites and are followed in order of preference by adventure stories, films with animals, slapstick comedies, historical films, and films with child stars. Travel films with their static shots are as unpopular as cartoons and serials, with their crowded action, are popular. Commenting on reactions to newsreels, Mr. Ford reports that children boo the dictators, heartily and spontaneously, and ponders the source of this pronounced antipathy. I imagine that the shots of Munich must have tried them sorely.

In other sections of the book Mr. Ford quotes generously from written and spoken comment on the subject. In this way he gives both sides in discussing whether or not films contribute to juvenile delinquency, frighten children and affect sleep or eyesight. Not

unnaturally many of the conclusions he reaches are favourable to the cinema. Even in these controversial passages, however, his informed and clear-sighted approach carries conviction. He never forgets that "children go to the cinema to enjoy themselves" and his chapter on the cultural possibilities of film entertainment starts from this sensible viewpoint. *Children in the Cinema* ought not to be the last book on its subject. As a pioneering study of a question of social and psychological importance it may be recommended.

H. Forsyth Hardy

MOSES AND MONOTHEISM. Sigmund Freud. Hogarth Press. 8*s.* 6*d.*

The history of science has been largely a record of the struggle against mankind's most cherished phantasies and superstitions. This explains the deep hostility which people feel towards science in spite of any amount of lip-service or even genuine appreciation. It is true that doctors are no longer killed in times of epidemic, nor are scientists now in danger of being burned at the stake, likeGalileo. But the violent attacks that greeted Darwin's and Freud's discoveries suggest that our feelings towards the bearer of unwelcome truths are not so very different, although their manner of expression has changed. We must admit that Freud has given ample reason for the unpopularity of his work, to mention only the discovery that man is not master of himself, but largely influenced by irrational *unconscious* forces. Just as Darwin encountered violent opposition because he maintained that man was not a special creation of God but only a link in Nature's general scheme of evolution,

Torquemada :

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THOMAS HOPE

A comprehensive study of anti-semitism, nationalism, and persecution in Spain during the fifteenth century, the period when the principles by which Europe is now being disintegrated, were first established. Illustrated. 8s. 6d. net

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Freud was exposed to even more furious attacks by his discovery that God was a creation of mankind and religion the product of the emotional conflicts of the small child over his parents. These ideas were embodied over a quarter of a century ago in *Totem and Taboo* (1912) and subsequently in *The Future of an Illusion* (1927).

To do full justice to Freud's latest book, *Moses and Monotheism*, would demand a happy combination of biblical scholar and psychoanalyst. I shall have to content myself here with giving the very briefest outline.

Freud maintains that the man Moses, the liberator of his people who gave them their religion and their laws was not a Jew but an Egyptian, his very name "mose" meaning in Egyptian "child"; that he was probably a priest or a noble during the XVIII dynasty under the Pharaoh Amenothep IV (*circa* 1375 B.C.) who introduced for the first time a new form of religion which departed from all ancient traditions, a strict monotheism, "the first attempt of its kind in the history of the world." After the death of Amenothep, the Egyptians returned to their old polytheistic beliefs and Moses, an ardent adherent of the new monotheistic religion, together with his own followers "his scribes, his servants, a group called the Levites" turned towards the oppressed Jews, imposed on them not only the monotheistic religion but the ancient rite of circumcision, hitherto known only to the Egyptians, and led the exodus from Egypt (about 1360 B.C.). The Jews, however, rebelled and killed their leader and at a place called "Quades" adopted from another Jewish tribe the cult of the God *Jahve*. This crime, the killing of Moses, eminently a father-substitute, the Jews endeavoured to erase from memory. Freud assumes that the priests

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REPRODUCTIONS OF PAINTINGS BY W. G. GILLIES

The above are among the contents of the first (September) number of the New Alliance, a review of art and letters in Scotland and in Ireland . . . poetry, stories, criticism, and the visual arts. Contributors to future numbers will include Sean O'Faolain, Eric Linklater, Neil Gunn, L. A. G. Strong, Elizabeth Bowen. Price, half-a-crown, or per annum, post free, ten-and-six from

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mixed the original figure of Moses with a later, Jewish Moses, to whom they ascribed the liberation from Egypt. As Freud pointed out in *Totem and Taboo* the crime of parricide gave rise to the conception of the "original sin". The sense of guilt connected with it later led by the way of repetition-compulsion to the killing of another great man, Jesus. The return of the repressed is repeated and a new religion was created by St. Paul. The original Father-religion was changed by the "killing of the Son" in a Son-religion, the beginning of Christianity.

Like all Freud's books, this one contains a wealth of ideas which, however, I am unfortunately prevented from considering at greater length owing to lack of space. Thus, for example, interesting sidelights are thrown on the problem of antisemitism, the problem of religious systems or of the elements of historical truth in tradition, etc.

On a more personal level, in connection with the history of the book itself, it may be interesting to note that Freud began to write it in Vienna where he lived under the protection of the Catholic Church but feared that by "publishing that essay I should loose that protection" and that he was able to complete and publish it in London where he now lives as a welcome guest.

WALTER SCHMIDEBERG

POEMS. F. GARCIA LORCA. English translation by STEPHEN SPENDER and J. L. GILI. The Dolphin. 8*s.* 6*d.*

GARCIA LORCA, POET of the green wind, the serene fountain, the gypsy dagger of Spain, is here given more

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fully to the English reader than one would have thought possible. The translations, printed opposite the Spanish, are faithful and reticent. They have not, and could not have, the music of the words that Lorca used; and no attempt has been made to change the Spanish assonance into an alien pattern of sounds. But the unrhymed and almost literal English words are used with such care for their sound, and for their associations, that they are, in their own right poems, not far from the quality of Lorca's poems.

Two criticisms seem possible of these English poems. One is that the language used derives from sources that are too literary; from Keats, even from Tennyson. In Lorca's language there is much that derives from the songs and dance-words traditional in Spain and much from common speech. It is a pity, for example, that "*caracolas*", used commonly for snails and their shells, should be translated "conch". As Lorca used it, for the girl's smooth skin, the word is equal to cockle-shell or mother-of-pearl, or some similar word out of the speech of ordinary people and the playing-rhymes of children. "Conch" is too much a bookman's word.

The second criticism is that the colours and heats that are in Lorca's poems are all too often thinned out in the English. Lorca did not write of English sunlight. One example is "*Qué sientes?*" translated literally as "What do you feel?" The phrase is used commonly for pain. The man in front of you stumbles and falls; is it just that he tripped and is too weary to move? Is he hit? You ask "*Qué sientes, compañero?*" The effect of literal translation, ignoring the pain-connotation that the phrase has for Spaniards, is to weaken the strange lines:

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"The Children: What is the pain in your mouth scarlet and thirsting?
"Myself: The savour of the bones of my great skull."

Again, this word "savour" is a literal translation of the Spanish "*sabor*". Yet the Spanish word seems to me to have the associations natural to a people whose savours are dominated by bitter olives, red peppers, the salt that all hot climates need. The literal translation is, in its way, correct: but the meaning is "sharp taste", or "salt taste", or "bitter taste". "Savour" has become, to us, too bland a word to give the meaning.

This thinning down, cooling down of images and adjectives occurs too often.

Yet these criticisms are, in a way, praise of this book. It stirs up so powerfully one's "homesickness" for Spain that one grumbles because the English summer and the English language have no such colours.

The preface is more neutral-shaded than the translations. The men who murdered Lorca are described as "an armed group whose political filiation, if any, cannot at present be established". And a protest is made against the "use of Lorca's name for purposes of propaganda" by the opponents of fascism.

Lorca, the preface insists, was not a *popular* poet in the class sense: "he is the poet of the Spanish people, in the racial sense."

This is true. Lorca was not concerned with Spanish politics. He was not murdered because he was a partisan or an adherent of the Popular Front. He was murdered (and fascism did nothing to find or punish his murderers) because he stood for Spain living, outspoken, by men who in one party or another, for one faith or another, desired Spain mute and dead. Whatever their faith or

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party, Falangist or Monarchist or blackly ignorant, these men represented fascism, and never more completely than when they killed this great poet, as fascism in many countries and by many methods has killed or tried to kill the people who remain alive.

TOM WINTRINGHAM

GREEK MEMORIES. COMPTON MACKENZIE. Chatto and Windus. 10*s.* 6*d.*

MR. MACKENZIE'S ACCOUNT of how he tried to establish an efficient branch of the Intelligence Service in Athens during the last War is now permitted publication. It is more pertinent to-day than it would have been when originally written, and it is more important to read it than to spend time on the dozens of hastily manufactured books upon dictatorship or the Czech betrayal. *Greek Memories* is essential, not only for its picture of Greece and for its implication of what the Official Secrets Act is able to do, but because it adds another piece to the puzzle which has fascinated for years; why do certain Englishmen continue to believe in England?

Like a poet to the Muses, they give everything they have, but whereas a poet is occasionally rewarded, they get no thanks, not oblivion even, simply persecution. It is a gloomy fact that to spread propaganda directed against all our traditions and ideals is apparently, to say the least, connived at, whereas to try to make things safer by honest criticism of defects in organization, learnt through previous experience, is punished. Mr. Mackenzie struggled to obtain essential information (on, for instance, the submarine campaign). He was hampered by meagre funds and general lack of co-operation. Here and there incidents are blurred through the lapse

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of time and his attitude is more that of the soldier than of the politician, but his book is so important both for the specialist and for the general reader, that his apparent detachment from affairs to-day should be forgotten. *Greek Memories* is not cheerful reading, but it is not only a serious book. Some of it reads like the best Henty, translated into wonderful prose. There is, in fact, danger that the reader will be so amused at the absurd, wild, incredible atmosphere, with always as background the Greek sea and the olives, that he will not pay enough attention to the documentary side of the volume. But it is for Mr. Mackenzie to record, and for us to profit—nor should we dismiss what he has to say with an " of course, it can't happen now ".

BRYHER

PILOT'S SUMMER. F. D. TREDREY. Illustrated. Duckworth. 8*s.* 6*d.*

THE INTEREST OF this book, written in the form of a diary of six months spent in the Royal Air Force, is confined chiefly to those who have some knowledge of aeroplanes, and to the ordinary reader the author's blithe descriptions of the many different types of machines tend to be rather confusing. It is written, however, in a clear, concise style, and the information he imparts offers an interesting and sometimes amusing insight into the routine of the R.A.F. The photographs are excellent.

L. ISITT